

A COMPILATION OF INSTRUCTIONS IN THE ART OF DANCE COSTUMING

A Thesis

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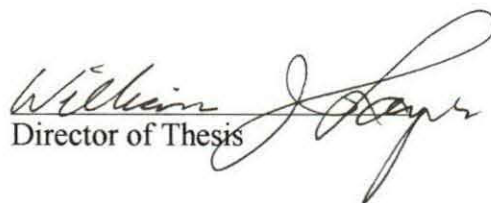
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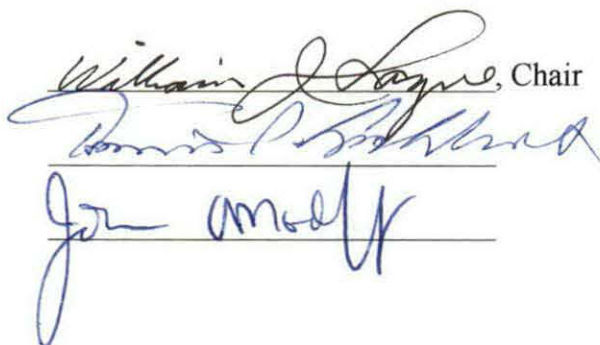

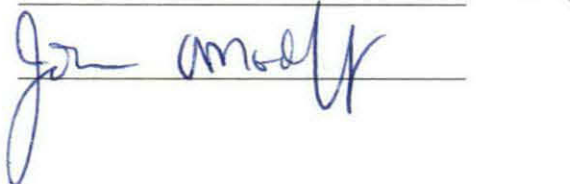
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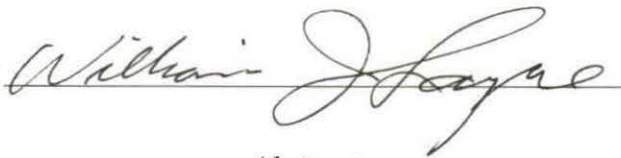
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Abstract

Dance costuming is different from other types of costuming. Traditions of the ballet and the movement of the dancers both are major considerations for a designer/costumer. Despite the special problem of dressing dancers, there is very little written on the subject. This is shown in the Review of Literature. Dance schools and dance companies in response to a questionnaire have indicated a need for written instructions on the construction of dance costumes. They have also said that they would like instructions for tutus, leotards, headpieces, and inexpensive costumes. Using my eighteen years of experience as a designer/costumer, I have put together a body of information that will help a theatre costumer to become a dance costumer. This will be found in Appendix A through F.

Accepted by:

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Acknowledgments

There are two people that I wish to thank. The first is Mary Joyce Lind, Artistic Director of Iowa Dance Theatre in Des Moines, Iowa. Ms. Lind taught me to be a dance costumer. She stood over my shoulder as I constructed my first tutu. She has answered countless questions through the years. She continues to answer my questions. She is always ready to discuss costuming and dance with me. Throughout the writing of this thesis I have known that I could call upon her for advice.

The second person I would like to thank is Dr. John V. Modaff, Associate Professor of Speech, Morehead State University. Dr. Modaff encouraged me to write a thesis. Not only has he encouraged me to write it, he has, over the past two years, continued to encourage me to stay with the project. I have subjected him to countless readings of this thesis and countless questions. He has given many hours of his time to make this project a success. Now that this project is finished he continues to encourage me to move on to other writing projects.

Thank you both very much.

A Compilation of Instruction in the Art of Dance Costuming

In my eighteen years of work as a costumer/designer I have observed a lack of written information on dance costuming. At the same time I have had the opportunity to work with some very talented and knowledgeable dance costumers and choreographers. My training in dance costuming has been with one of the exceptional choreographer/costumers, Mary Joyce Lind, founder of the Des Moines Ballet and Iowa Dance Theatre. Ms. Lind has generously shared her knowledge of dance costuming over the eighteen years that I have worked with her. She has also led me to a greater appreciation of the dance. Through her, I have met and worked with other choreographers, costumers and dancers.

Mary Joyce and I have spoken often of the shortage of dance costumers and written dance costume information. This lack of information and instruction may, in part, account for the lack of dance costumers. There is a large amount of theatre costume instruction available but dance has a different set of problems which those instructions do not address.

The dance costumer must be acutely aware of the body and how it moves. There is no script to read. The costumer must instead listen to the music, attend rehearsals to watch the choreography and the dancers, and work with the director. Dance costumes are more abstract than most theatre costumes. They must also show the body, since it is the body that is communicating. If an artistic director requires costumes for one of the traditional ballets, like Swan Lake, the costumer should be

aware that there would be little latitude for creativity and that even the length of the tutu is predetermined.

In the eighteen years that I have been dressing dancers, I have learned from listening to and observing other costumers. I have questioned and observed dancers and listened to choreographers. I have adapted theatre techniques and I have worked out solutions by trial and error process.

In recent months I have spent time with Mary Joyce Lind and recorded our conversations. We have discussed a philosophy of dance costuming as well as the actual construction of costumes. I have recorded conversations with Eileen Thomas, a dancer and costumer who is a member of Susan Marshall Dance Company. I have interviewed Cathy Bergman, a jazz choreographer and dance teacher. I have talked to Janice Baker, dance teacher with Iowa State University. All have been very open and helpful and all have agreed to help me throughout this project. All agree that there is a definite void that needs to be filled in the way of dance costume instructions. I would like to combine this gathered information with my own knowledge on the subject in a manner that would be useful to those who would wish to costume dancers in the future.

It is important that this work be done if for no other reason than that each dance costumer does not have to gather information in the way in which I have had to do. One should not have to reinvent the wheel. Here I put together the information gathered from these experienced people in the field and add to that the things I have

figured out on my own. This would provide future dance costumers with something to build on rather than having to start over. Dance costuming is very specialized and theatre costumes will not do. Often smaller and regional dance companies must resort to ordering costumes from mail order companies. These costumes generally do not fit properly and directors' choices are limited. Dance companies and dance schools have their stories about these costumes; from costumes arriving two days after the performance, to poor quality, to poor fit. If twenty-five matching costumes are ordered and twenty-four arrive, there is a problem and if the twenty-fifth costume does arrive on time it may very well be a different dye lot or a different style. It is very difficult to order the same style of costume in an adult and in a child size. This is a major problem for smaller companies that are made up of teenage dancers some of whom are in child sizes and some that are in adult sizes. The teenage dancer presents another problem that mail order costumes can not deal with. Their sizes change rapidly. Costumes ordered in August may not fit when they arrive in October. If a company or dance school has male dancers, mail order companies have even less to offer for these dancers. Mail order companies cater primarily to dance schools, providing recital costumes that are intended for one or two performances. Often these costumes can not be laundered. This is not practical for a dance company.

A good costume does not necessarily improve a performance but a bad one is a distraction to a good performance. The traditional ballets are expensive to costume, and even if funding is available, finding someone who knows how to make a tutu can

be a difficult task. There are a few places where one can order ready-made tutus, but these tutus must still be fitted and they have the same drawbacks as other mail order costumes. A small dance company may have someone willing to costume but there is no one to tell them how; and written material is very limited and hard to find. It becomes easier to choose choreography which requires basic leotards or unitards. Even these mail order leotards and unitards do not always fit as well as a director might wish and they will still have to be adapted with dye, paint, appliques, accessories or scissors to change them into costumes.

Most people planning to work with dance costuming do not have the time or the opportunity to work with an experienced costumer even though this is a wonderful way to learn. They should not be deprived of the knowledge as a result. I have put together a body of information and instruction that an artistic director could hand to a willing costumer so that that costumer could adapt his/her work to the very specialized field of dance costuming.

I, like many other dance costumers, did not set out to be a dresser of dancers. I became involved because my son was a dancer and costuming him was always a problem. With the help and patience of Mary Joyce Lind, I was able to take my sewing skills and my background in the study of design and color to become a designer/costumer. Over the years I have spent many hours in the studio watching dancers. I have taken what I have read about theatre costumes and experimented and adapted to see what will work and what will not work.

During the time I have been working with costumes, stretch fabrics have improved and are more available to the public. These fabrics have their own special qualities and problems. They can be very exciting to work with but they can also be difficult. They are expensive so a costumer wants to keep experimentation and mistakes to a minimum. Many of the fabrics that were once used for tutus are difficult to find and some are no longer available. The dance costumer must adapt to the new fabrics with different properties. Some of these fabrics are better, but some are not.

I would like to provide the dance costumer with the basics so that he/she can spend more time on creating works of art that work.

A Review of the Literature

Often when costuming for a small or regional dance company one must be able to assume the responsibility for all design and construction work. Costumer Leanne Mahoney, in an interview with Cristina Tejeda, stresses this importance of flexibility of the dance costumer in that he/she must be ready to accept other jobs as fitter, dresser, milliner, seamstress, dyer or painter, not just designer (Tejeda, 1984). Ms. Mahoney describes the difference between theatre and dance costuming as: "In dance the primary concern is working with movement, that is, movement of the choreographed body and the fabric in relation to that body." (Tejeda, p. 65). These are important aspects of dance that a costumer must keep in mind. "Costumes end up in the environment of the set. If you look at it as a painting—which I do, that is my orientation—this big proscenium-shaped painting is all right as long as it stays put.

But if the red gets up and walks over to sit next to the green, then you have a problem.

I watch rehearsals and resist pulling out a sketch pad for a while.” (Ostlere, 1991).

This point of view expressed by Patricia Zipprodt, Broadway costume designer, in an interview with Hilary Ostlere, is even more important advice to the dance costumer whose canvas is in continual motion. This has not always been a major concern with dance costuming. Dance costuming, specifically ballet, evolved from a tradition of court attire in its early years to its own art form today.

In her philosophy of costuming, Elizabeth Goepp (Goepp, 1928) quotes Stark Young: “Costumes become the art of the theatre when clothes are translated into something which they are not before, and have added to them something that was not before. This something added is derived from the play, from the scene, the lights, the dramatic mood and idea, the whole theatrical occasion of which the costumes make a part.” Young further states that the artist designer must “... establish and create the relation of his own inner world to the world outside of him.” (cited in Goepp, p. 398).

Costume designer, Gabriel Berry, takes this thought a little further: “And you create the illusion of reality much more effectively without being a slave to reality...And you’re not going to get this by slavish adherence to what they would really wear, because those things may not breathe, may not move, may not live on stage.” Berry also says: “You’re always lying. You’re always doing stuff that’s deceiving people. And if you do it right, they just accept it...” (Reiter, 1995).

Often principal dancers would wear their finest tutu and their own jewelry without regard for the story of the ballet. Members of the chorus were generally costumed to better reflect their characters than were the principal dancers. (Anderson, 1974). Earlier, a dancer by the name of La Camanngo was one of the first to shorten her skirt in order to show the movement of her feet. (Goepp, p. 408). The long and the short tutu came into being in a performance of *La Sylphide* and originated with designer Eugene Lamey. (Levinson cited in Goepp, p. 406).

Heavy masks and headpieces were abandoned to accommodate the movement of dancers. The early years of ballet found dancers to be moving in heavy costumes often made of brocades. Dancers and costumes were described as "... decorated towers that the ballet master moved around on a giant chess-board." (Levinson cited in Goepp, p. 406). "In 1772, the dancer Gardel ... refused to go on representing the sun in a towering black wig and copper sunburst." (Goepp, p. 408).

May 19, 1909 marks the beginning of a new era of ballet with the opening of the Ballets Russe at the Theatre du Chatelet. (Buckle, 1978). Leon Bakst, costumer and set designer, was one of the many artists of the time to be associated with the ballet which was under the influence of the impresario Serge Diaghilev. Diaghilev, a member of the Russian 'intelligentsia', is best known for his promotion of the ballet and for bringing it to the attention of the west. By bringing together the creative minds of the time to work with him at the Ballets Russe he was able to make ballet the art form it is today. (Spencer, 1974). Diaghilev brought together the likes of Stravinsky,

Ravel, Debussy, Fokine, Pavlova, Nijinsky, Balanchine, Bakst, Picasso, Chagall, Erte', Rouault and Chanel. Early in his career, Diaghilev said the following of himself in a letter to his stepmother in 1895: "I am, firstly, a charlatan, though rather a brilliant one; secondly, a great charmer; thirdly, frightened of nobody; fourthly, a man with plenty of logic and very few scruples; fifthly, I seem to have no real talent. None the less, I believe that I have found my true vocation to be a Maecenas, I have everything necessary except money- but that will come!" (Buckle, p. 18).

Leon Bakst's costumes for the ballet are known for rich and sensuous beauty. In reference to him and the changes he was making in costuming, Arsene Alexandre's statement makes clear his contribution to dance: "...the fact that if one is a creator of stage characters, and has the privilege of dressing them on behalf of a great poet or musician, one must not look on them as insipid, monotonous puppets, but delight in their individuality and love them as human beings." (Alexandre, 1972).

The costumes designed by the various artists, such as Picasso and Bakst are as recognizable an element in the ballets of the period of Diaghilev as the music itself. The renderings and photographs of the costumes of Picasso and Bakst, among others of the Ballet Russes, are recorded in many books of dance. These artists gave costuming credibility and raised it to an art. (Spencer, p. 105). Editor Parmentier Miel speaking of Picasso, "...in 'Le Tricorne' the painter added the breath of Spain – a spirit which lets the designs stand by themselves as works of art..." (Miel, 1978). Another designer who worked with the Ballets Russes was Erte'. "Erte', like Bakst, is

one of the few designers who treated costume design as a fine art; his work in this genre are not only up to the standards, but are among the finest costume designs ever done.” (Erte’, 1979). Speaking of Bakst: “From the first he was acclaimed a master of the harmony of line and colour in movement; that is one of his great secrets, and with each successive production his work has been more clearly recognized as an essential factor in, and an integral compliment of, the enchanting inventions of the poets and musicians with whom he has worked. (Alexandre, p. 3). Bakst, Picasso and Erte’ remain important names in dance costuming. They have set standards for costumers today.

A concern for movement continued through the years and dance costuming continued to evolve further separating this art form from theatre costuming. This concern for movement makes it important for the costumer to be familiar with the way the body moves and the way fabric moves. Attending rehearsals and trying ideas out on the body which is in motions is very helpful. Carlegh Hoff, a dance costumer says: “The costume only begins to come to life when, still in the process of construction, it is tried again and again in rehearsal.” (Parshall, 1981). This is an important difference with theatre costumes. The costumes almost seem to have to rehearse right along with the dancers. Hoff works with stretch fabrics, such as milliskin, and then adds the sculptural elements of wire, foam, and a number of construction techniques. She further describes the three different ways she works. Generally, she designs after the choreography is set, less often she designs first and choreography is set around her

designs and other times she works with the choreographer, set designer, and musical director on a unified collaboration. (Parshall, p. 28).

Other dance costumers express many of the same things about their chosen art. Jen-Jacob Worsaae (Hunt, 1987) speaks of the abstract quality of the dance costume and the excitement of translating styles and costume periods into designs that will move with the dancers. He is concerned with being able to show movement and the body and to show them both in the most favorable way. Worsaae says: "It's very important that you have a sense of the dancer's body, support him, and have an eye for the proportions--he may have long legs and a short torso or the opposite. You can even change the look. It means you have to be very involved, be there for the fittings, and work with the costume maker on all the details. The same costume for three different dancers may be cut differently." (Hunt, p. 50).

A costumer today can turn to many books on dance and find photographs and renderings of these famous costumes, but it is not as easy to find instructions in making costumes or the requirements and limitations put on the designer both by tradition and the movement of the dancer.

For instructions I have found How to Dress Dancers (Harrison, 1988) to be helpful with character and national costumes. There is information on the construction of the tutu, maybe a little brief for a new costumer, but at least it was in print. The instructions on constructing leotards predate lycra and milliskin. This is the only book on dance costuming which I have found. It states on the back cover that it is the

“...first book on the costuming specifically addressed to the world of dance.”

(Harrison, 1975). This book is now out of print. Elizabeth Hayes, (1933) in her book, Dance Composition and Production, spends almost 30 pages on costuming and designing. The emphasis is on the dancer being able to do his/her own costuming; therefore, she tells how to make skirts and tunics and tells techniques for altering leotards with dyes, paint and trim. A Practical Approach to Costume Design and Construction (Thomas, 1982) includes a chapter on dance costuming. Most useful are the men's tunic and shirt patterns. There are also patterns for tutu bodices. The author discusses several ways of solving the problem of freedom of movement in the underarm area, including several types of gussets. This two-volume set is also out of print.

Kathryn Kilner Conrad's (1979) twenty-nine-page booklet, Classical Tutu Construction, is the most instructive dance costume publication that I have found. Her directions and illustrations are clear and easy to follow. Her method of construction is similar to the way in which I have learned tutu construction from Mary Joyce Lind.

For general costuming The Costume Designer's Handbook (Ingham & Covey, 1983), The Costumer's Handbook (Ingham & Covey, 1980), and The Costume Technician's Handbook (Ingham & Covey, 1992); all written by Rosemary Ingham and Elizabeth Covey are excellent sources. I consider them my most valuable costume books, even though they do not address dance costuming specifically. These books discuss costuming from pattern drafting, necessary shop equipment, fabrics,

alterations, dyeing, budgets, research, renderings, sources; to how to get along with actors, directors, and other production people. The books include many photographs, illustrations, and charts which can be applied to any type of costuming.

Other books on fabric surface treatment, hat construction, soft jewelry and other costume treatments have proven helpful. Batik, Tie Dyeing, Stenciling, Silk Screen, Block Printing: The Hand Decorating of Fabric written by F. A. Kafka (1959) has very good instructions for surface treatment of fabrics. Any of the techniques in this book can be adapted to use on leotards and other dance costumes. From the Neck Up: An Illustrated Guide to Hatmaking by D. Dreher (1981) covers the basics of hatmaking and includes patterns for historical hats and headpieces. The book is divided into lessons as: working with straw, working with felt, making a headblock, and trimming a hat. The instructions are complete and easy to follow. The book concludes with a good-sized glossary and bibliography. Glynn McKay's (1994) Mask Making is a good source for the dance costumer. Directions are easy to follow.

Nancy Howell-Koehler's (1977) Soft Jewelry: Design, Technique, & Materials (1977) is more of a book of body ornament and the ideas presented can very easily be applied to dance costumes. The pieces shown are large and therefore work for stage costumes. The pieces are, as the title indicates, soft and they are for the most part light weight, which makes them very good for the decoration of a dancer's costume. The designs are inventive and can inspire the costumer to new ways of doing things.

Since the costumer should be familiar with ballet and other forms of dance, it is fortunate that there are many books on the subject. 101 Stories of the Great Ballets written by George Balanchine and Francis Mason is my choice, but there are many others that are equally good. There are many sources for pictures of dance costumes and period costumes. Art books are a wonderful source for information on period costumes.

Dance costumers must have knowledge of ballet, its history, and its traditions and there are books on the subject readily available. One must know about costuming in general and I have mentioned some excellent sources for study. The dance costumer needs references in photographs and renderings for guidance and inspiration; these are also easy to find and plentiful. Instead of a script, the designer needs the story lines of the ballets and there are many sources. Books that deal with the construction of dance costumes are few. Most dance costumers continue to learn from other dance costumers if they are fortunate enough to have the opportunity to work with one. The lack of written material continues to be a frustration to a dance costumer.

My search for materials on dance costuming has been in progress for twenty years. I first sought the information on constructing dance costuming because I wished to learn about the art and mechanics, as I was trying to costume for a dance company and a dance school. I learned a great deal from Mary Joyce Lind as I costumed for her dance school and Iowa Dance Theatre. As stretch fabrics became more available we began to experiment with them. Experimentation was our only choice. This was

expensive. For several years milliskin was our only choice of stretch fabrics. I did my learning on milliskin and this ended up being good even if it was costly. Those early unitards and leotards I made fifteen or more years ago seem very crude now.

I had never heard of milliskin until Mary Joyce found out about it from the artist director of the Minneapolis Ballet. We invested in some of the fabric and a sewing machine with a stretch stitch. The stretch in milliskin is almost the same in all directions, unlike most of the other stretch fabrics which have a better stretch in one direction and a lesser stretch in the other direction. The quality of milliskin is also reflected in the fact most of those early garments are still in use at Iowa Dance Theatre. Most have been reworked and redyed several times. This is due to the quality of the fabric. It is generally more difficult to work with milliskin than other stretch fabric as it rolls when cut and when sewn. The advantages are: uniform stretch which remains the same in each piece of fabric, the durability of the fabric and the beauty of the fabric. The fabric takes a dye and the dye can be removed.

Working with a dance school and a dance company I was faced with a number of problems. The dance school, small by some standards, had around 150 students between the age of three and adulthood. There was one spring recital. All students needed at least two costumes. Mary Joyce had a policy of keeping recital costs very low. Costumes had to be designed after the choreography was written, usually no later than February. Each different design had to be made into a sample costume which could be viewed for design, fit, and movement. I also needed to know how much time

was involved in the construction so that if a design required too much time, modifications could be made so that deadlines could be met. While writing the contents of Appendix A through F, I have tried to keep budgets and time as important elements.

The dance company was new and had a whole set of its own problems. Money was the biggest problem. Building an audience was also a problem. We chose to solve these problems with grants and performances of Nutcracker. For many dance companies Nutcracker is the major money making performance as it is familiar to the public and many families consider going to a Nutcracker Ballet to be part of the holiday tradition. Sets and costumes can be costly. With planning and creative thinking one can present a very nice production on a very limited budget. In Appendix F, I discuss this in detail.

Whether working with a dance school or a dance company, leotards, unitards and tights are basic to a dancer's wardrobe. With suggestions from dancers and choreographers, and lots of experimentation, I have put together designs, and suggestions for the construction of these basics. Leotards, unitards and tights are presented in Appendix A.

The tutu is a costume that is unique to ballet. It is often viewed as very difficult to construction. In truth, trying to find instructions or someone who knows how to make a tutu may be more difficult for the new costumer than the actual construction. I learned to make a tutu working with Mary Joyce. Since then I have found two other

sources for instruction both of which are now out of print. The first, How to Dress Dancers, written by M. K. Harrison (1988) has instructions for construction of a tutu, but they are brief and probably not adequate unless one already has some knowledge on the subject. The second is a twenty-nine-page booklet, Classical tutu construction written by K.K. Conrad (1979); it describes the construction of a tutu and is more detailed and easier to follow. The instructions are similar to the instructions I received while learning from Mary Joyce. There are several things within the booklet that I would disagree with. The instructions, which I give in Appendix B, are taken from what I learned from Mary Joyce and combined with things which I learned by trial and error. Many hours are required to make and fit a tutu. The material costs can be low budget or high. What matters when it appears on stage are the fit and the design (and in that order- if it does not fit the design will not help).

Working on a limited budget with the dance school and the dance company it was necessary to be inventive. Though those years there were many successes and some real failures. I learned from both.

Method

In the last two years I have made a very careful search to find any written instruction on dance costuming. Feeling that there was a need for this information I put together a questionnaire.

The questionnaire asked:

1. How many dancers does your company or school represent?
2. Do you have a costumer? Full time or part time?
3. About what percent of your costumes are:
 - a. Designed and made in your own shop?
 - b. Made by volunteer help?
 - c. Contracted out?
 - d. Ordered from catalogues?
 - e. Other?
4. Have you had difficulty in finding costumes which meet your needs?
5. Have you found it difficult to find a costumer with a knowledge of “dance” costuming?
6. Have you had difficulty in finding written material on the construction of dance costumes?
7. If you could have a book on dance costume construction, what would you want it to include?
8. Have you ever just not done a ballet or other dance piece because of a costume problem?

9. If so, was the reason:
 - a. Budget?
 - b. No one knew how to make the costumes?
 - c. No one stocked the costumes?
 - d. Not able to find the materials?

I sent the questionnaire to twenty dance schools and/or dance companies. I tried to spread them out across the country. I used the listing of schools and companies in Dance Magazine as my source for names and addresses. The questionnaires were sent to:

1. Ballet Arts- Tucson, Arizona
2. Idyllwild Arts Academy- Idyllwild, California
3. Rotaru Performing Arts Academy- Atlanta, Georgia
4. Dance Dimensions- Fort Lauderdale, Florida
5. American Dance Center- Overland Park Kansas
6. The Dance Gallery- Crown Point, Indiana
7. Lexington Ballet- Lexington Kentucky
8. Maine State School for the Performing Arts- Westbrook, Maine
9. Classical Ballet School of Greater Boston- Boston, Massachusetts
10. Minnesota Dance Theatre & School, Inc.- Minneapolis, Minnesota
11. Stephens College- Columbia, Missouri
12. Omaha Academy of Ballet- Omaha, Nebraska
13. American Ballet Theatre- New York, New York

14. The Manhattan Ballet School, Inc.- New York, New York
15. Tulsa School of Ballet- Tulsa, Oklahoma
16. The Conservatory of Classical Dance- Eugene, Oregon
17. Ballet Theatre School- Kingston, Pennsylvania
18. Florence Ballet Academy- Florence, South Carolina
19. Vermont Conservatory of Ballet- Essex, Vermont
20. Makaroff School of Ballet- Appleton, Wisconsin

While I had only nine responses, all said there was a need for written information on dance costuming. Responses were received from the following:

1. Ballet Arts- Tucson Arizona
2. Dance Dimensions- Fort Lauderdale, Florida
3. Rotaru Performing Arts Academy- Atlanta, Georgia
4. American Dance Center- Overland Park, Kansas
5. Minnesota Dance Theatre & School Inc.- Minneapolis, Minnesota
6. The Manhattan Ballet School, Inc.- New York, New York
7. Tulsa School of Ballet- Tulsa, Oklahoma
8. Florence Ballet Academy- Florence, South Carolina
9. Makaroff School of Ballet- Appleton, Wisconsin

After establishing that there is a lack of written information on the subject of dance costuming through the research presented in the Review of Literature and establishing a need for the information through the questionnaire, I began talking to Mary Joyce about what should be included in a text of dance costuming. I discussed

with Mary Joyce and Eileen Thomas, a dancer and costumer with Susan Marshall Company, a number of topics involving dance costuming. These included a philosophy of dance costuming, fabrics, sources, budgets, fit, design, color, and lighting, as well as what part the costume plays in performance.

I have taken this information and combined it with the knowledge from experience and on the job training from the past eighteen years. During those years I have costumed for Iowa Dance Theatre, Ballet Iowa, Dance Commotion, and Ashland Youth Ballet. I have also done contract costume jobs for a number of dance school recitals. I have supplied my own line of leotards and unitards to dance schools. I have gone through my own notes and my own patterns. I have put together the information which I feel will enable a theatre costumer to become a dance costumer. In fact I feel that anyone who can sew and has some creativity could use my instructions to dress dancers. I have divided this work into six sections:

1. Leotards, unitards and tights
2. The tutu
3. Skirts and add ons
4. Men's costumes
5. Headpieces, hats and masks
6. Nutcracker on a budget
7. Annotated Bibliography

These are covered in Appendix A through G.

Conclusion

I have put together the basics of dance costuming in a form that I believe can be followed by a theatre costumer or a person with some sewing experience. I have tried to cover the things which make different from theatre costuming. I have put the material together in a way that I believe will be readable and enjoyable. I have injected humor to achieve this goal.

I have tried to cover the things which make dance costuming different from theatre costuming. A person doing dance costuming should have a knowledge of theatre costuming and historical costuming. These fields are well covered in many very good books.

I believe that there is a need for such information and I have tried to provide for an audience which is in need of it, and will appreciate and use it.

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Appendix A

Leotards, Unitards and Tights

Leotards, unitards and tights are the basic units of costuming for the dancer.

If you are a dance costumer who has never worked with stretch fabric, I would suggest that for your first attempt that you use cotton lycra. I find that it is best to order only black and white in any stretch fabric. Stretch fabrics take the dyes very well, making it possible to get the colors you want. By buying just black and white you can keep the fabric on hand and even make the leotards before you have decided on your colors. Working with the dyes is fun and it is easy to become an expert in a very short time, or at least convince others that you are.

Before you do anything, measure your dancers. Figure A1 includes a chart to aid in this process. Allow plenty of time for measuring and ask each dancer to bring his/her best fitting and favorite leotard. Have the dancer put on that leotard and ask questions about the leotard and costumes in general. Find out what they like about the leotard. Is there anything they would like to have different? Measure the dancer and ask to make a pattern off of the leotard. On that pattern record that dancers measurements, and any information which they have given you that might be of use later. Dancers know a lot about costumes; talk to them about their ideas. Ask them to share their concerns about fit, movement, and comfort. Let them know you care about their opinions. Good relations with the dancers should be established right away since fittings can be long and tiring; and you will need their cooperation. Since I use elastic in the legs of leotard, I measure a piece of elastic around the leg of the dancer to check

Figure Caption

Figure A1. Measurement chart for leotards and unitards.

Name _____

Height _____

Weight _____

Chest _____

Waist _____

Hips _____

Girth _____

Arm Length _____

Upper Arm _____

Lower Arm _____

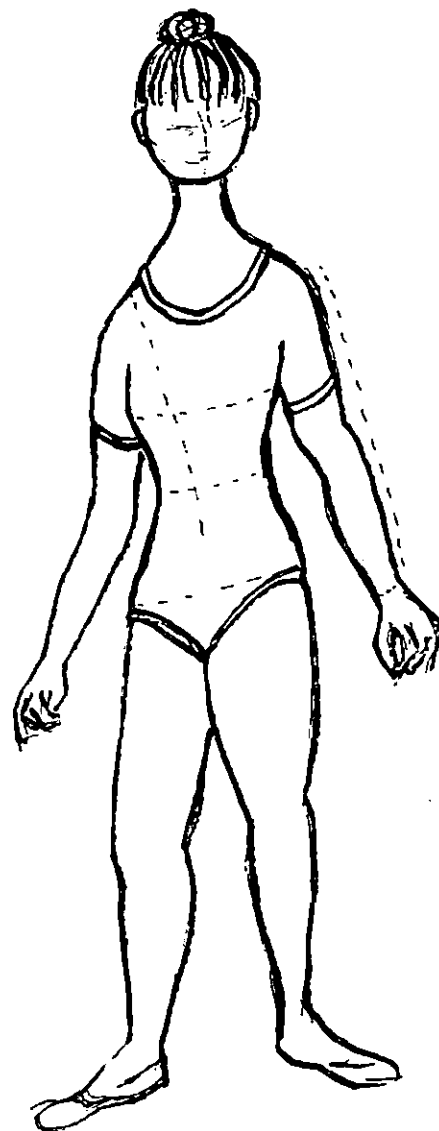
Wrist _____

Outseam _____

Inseam _____

Thigh _____

Calf _____



for tightness. Write this measurement on the pattern so that you will know what is comfortable for the dancer. After you have measured all your dancers and made a pattern off of their favorite leotard, you should have a good start on a pattern library of your own. Your next step will be to apply this information to your design and make a pattern allowing $\frac{1}{4}$ inch for seams. As you work on your design keep what you learned from the dancers in mind. Most leotards have two pieces: a front and a back. This is fine for a child's leotard, but for an adult the addition of fullness in the seat can best be accomplished by adding a seam up the center back. Figure A2. Another thing to keep in mind; the bigger the neck opening, the more apt the leotard is to slip off the shoulders. To solve this problem:

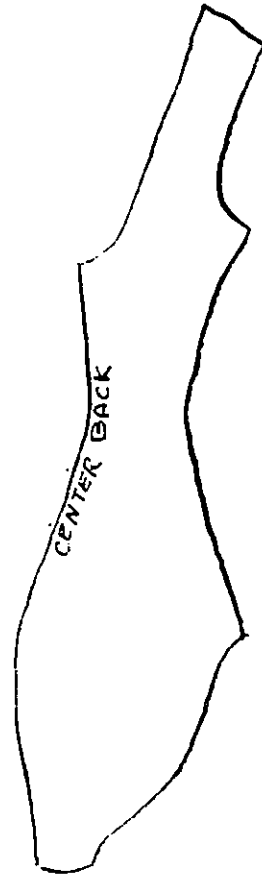
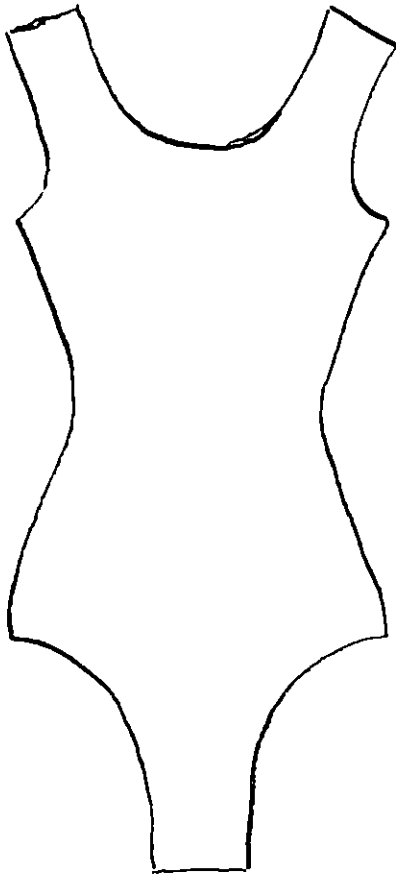
1. If the neck is to be low in the back, compensate by raising it in the front.
2. Use elastic in the neck binding or just use elastic instead of binding.
3. Use cross pieces of elastic (dancers can hide these with makeup).
4. Instead of actually cutting the leotard low (particularly in the front) add a panel of flesh tone stretch fabric to give the illusion of the neckline you wish to present to the audience.

When designing the legs of the leotard, the higher up you cut the leg openings the more apt the garment is to ride up in the back. You can minimize this by the addition of fullness in the seat.

If the leotard is to have sleeves be very careful not to cut the armholes too big. Do not allow for stretch when you consider the width and length of the sleeve.

Figure Caption

Figure A2. Leotard pattern using a seam in the back to add fullness in the seat area.



Before we go any further we should talk about stretch fabric. If you have never worked with stretch fabric or if this will be your first leotard I would suggest you try cotton lycra. Stretch fabric tends to roll up which is very frustrating when you are trying to cut or sew on it. The first leotard I made was of milliskin, a very high quality, light weight stretch fabric. Milliskin is a beautiful fabric and has the same stretch in all four directions, but it rolls more than any of the other dancewear fabrics I have ever used. A milliskin garment will hold up for years and can be dyed and redyed. You may want to wait and try working on it when you have plenty of time. As you work with it, you do get used to it and will be able to work with it just the same as any other fabric. The quality of the final garment makes the aggravation worth it.

As soon as all of your patterns are made you are ready to cut the fabric. You will need some very good scissors, a large area for spreading out the fabric for cutting, a box full of smooth stones, washable fabric markers or chalk, pieces of scrap ribbon (light colors and around ½ inch wide), a permanent marker, your fabric which you have pre-washed and your patterns. If you will be cutting several leotards the same size fold the fabric and cut two at the same time. Since stretch fabric is expensive you will want to try various ways of laying out your patterns to conserve. Don't waste time with this process however, because your time is also costly (or it should be). Let's back up to the pre-washed fabric. It is a very good idea to fold it very neatly as soon as you remove it from the dryer. If you buy your fabric in large amounts you now have a large quantity of fabric to keep under control while you cut. Unfold what will cover your cutting area and spread it out smoothly. I hope you locked the cat in another

room before you straightened and smoothed the fabric; if not do it now and straighten and smooth the fabric again. Figure A3. If you are going to cut more than one thickness, be sure that edges are even and all layers are smooth. This step can take longer than the actual cutting. As you place your pattern pieces on the fabric, you will want the greater stretch of the fabric going in a straight horizontal line on the leotard. Place pattern pieces as close together as you can. Anchor them with smooth stones. Mark around the pattern with chalk or washable marker. Remove pattern and cut. This method works much better than pinning the pattern and then cutting around it. If you choose to use binding on the neck, arm and leg openings cut a strip of fabric about the length of all the openings and about one inch wide.

When cutting a number of leotards, you will want to be sure that you do not lose track of which leotard belongs to which dancer. As you cut each leotard write the dancer's name on a three to four inch piece of ribbon with a permanent pen. Pin all pieces of the leotard together along with the ribbon. Roll it up and secure it with a rubber band. Save all those scraps of fabric.

You may sew your leotard on a serger or a sewing machine with a stretch stitch. A serger will save you time, but not everyone has one. Whichever machine you use you will be sewing as close to your cut edges as you can. (If you remember, you only left $\frac{1}{4}$ inch seam allowance on your pattern.) Following the steps in Figure A4, begin by placing right sides together of the back pieces. Stitch up center back seam. Open and place right side to right side of the front panel. Stitch at shoulders. Measure the neck opening and cut a length of binding a couple of inches shorter. Stitch ends

Figure Caption

Figure A3. A cat in the sewing room.

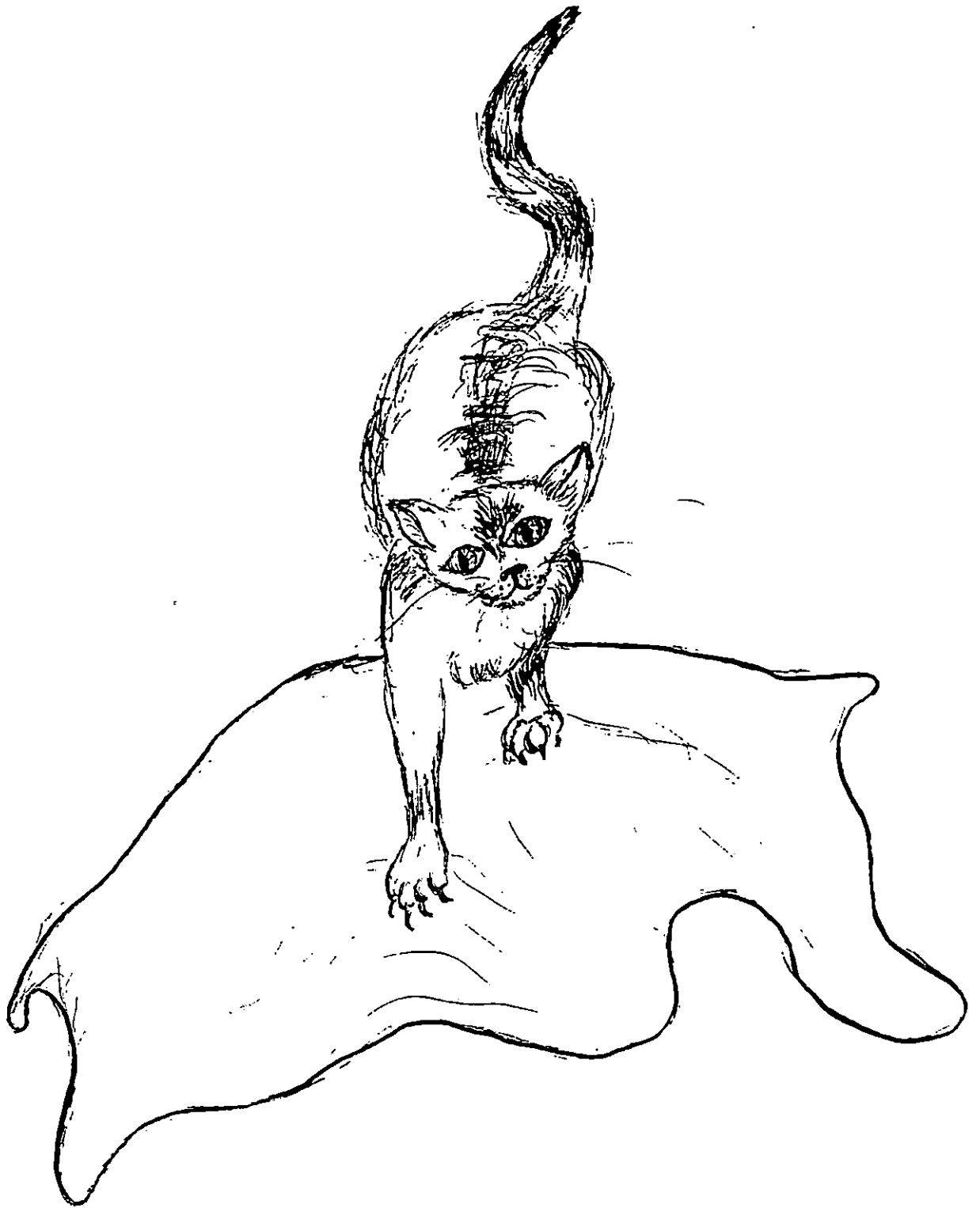
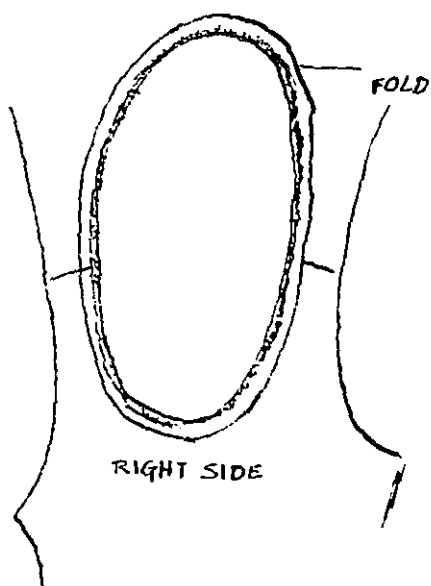
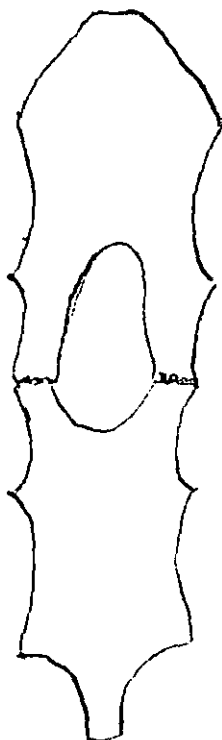
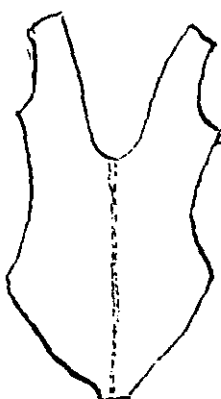


Figure Caption

Figure A4. Assembly of leotard.



together, fold lengthwise, determine center of the binding and pin that to the right side and center front of leotard. Pin seam of binding to right side and center back. Stitch binding to leotard as pinned. Next, place arm binding on the arm opening. The arm binding is only going to be about $\frac{1}{2}$ an inch shorter than the arm opening. Stitch binding to each arm opening. Again put the front and back right sides together. Sew the side seams, being careful that the binding is matched up. Into one of those seams sew the name-tag which you made of ribbon. Fold the ribbon and sew the raw edges into the seam. Next stitch the crotch together. Cut two pieces of binding about one inch shorter than the openings stitch together as you did at the neck binding. Again fold length-wise. The binding on the legs will need elastic in the channel formed by the fold. You determined the length of this elastic at the time you measured the dancer. Stitch ends of elastic together overlapping about one inch. Place the elastic into the fold of the binding before pinning to the edge of the leg opening. Stitch in place being careful not to stitch through the elastic.

If the leotard has sleeves, put binding on the lower edge of sleeve. Sew the side seams of the leotard together after finishing the neck binding. Sew the sleeve together, starting with the lower end so that you can match up the bindings. Pin the sleeve into the armhole. Stitch in place.

You may choose to use elastic instead of binding for a different finish. If you do add an extra $\frac{1}{4}$ inch as you cut your fabric. Stitch the whole leotard together first and then apply the elastic. I prefer $\frac{1}{4}$ inch cotton swimwear elastic. Cut elastic for the neck a couple of inches shorter than the neck opening. Fold to determine center and

pin center to wrong side center front of the leotard. Starting at the center back zigzag stitch all around the edge of the neck stretching the elastic evenly and overlapping the ends of the elastic at the center back. Now turn under the raw edge and zigzag stitch again, this time on the right side of the garment. Repeat the process in the armholes and leg holes. Stretch the elastic keeping the comfort of the dancer in mind.

Maxine Fabrics in New York City sells patterns for unitards, tights and a princess-line leotard. They are sized for use with milliskin fabric. I like the unitard pattern and use it. It is easy to use and to alter for size. If you order the pattern for a unitard you can use that pattern for tights. Cut above the waist, not at the waist and add inch wide elastic to this raw edge. Cut the elastic the same size as the waist opening allowing one inch for overlapping.

Depending on the size and style of a leotard and the width of the fabric, you will be able to cut two to three leotards from one yard of fabric. It takes about one yard of fabric for a unitard and about the same amount for a pair of tights.

Your finished garment can be dyed. If you do choose to dye it, dye some scraps of the fabric at the same time as you can use these scraps to make a waist-band for a skirt to match the leotard. Scraps can also be used in head-bands and other trim. Stretch fabrics take dye very well but there are some things you need to know about the process.

With stretch fabric you must be very careful if using the dry dyes. I mix my dyes away from the fabric as air born particles of dye can mess up your dye job. Mix your dye in boiling water. The garment to be dyed should also be hot and wet. Put the

garment into the dye and move it around to insure even color. Wash the garment and dry in a dryer to set the dye.

Sometimes it is nice to dye a unitard so that the color intensifies as it nears the toe. This is not difficult to do. Dip the unitard into the dye a little at a time starting with the toe. Tie dying and batik are also nice to try on a leotard or a unitard. I also like paint and airbrush. Rosco makes a product that can be mixed with latex paint and then heated to create a raised pattern. Bronzing powders work well on leotards and unitards. Acrylic paints work too. I like the raised patterns that can be achieved with the paint additives but this can also be done with applique for some heavier designs.

To applique on stretch fabric, choose lycra that is the same as the lycra of the garment (or at least the same stretch). Place the piece to be appliqued on the garment, grains running the same way. Draw your design on the fabric. If you want it raised use a little dacron stuffing between the layers. Baste around the edge. Stitch around the design with a stretch stitch and then carefully cut out the parts that are not part of the design. You can also cut all the way through the leotard to create a hole which you can leave as a hole or you can stitch another layer from the back. Stretch fabric also comes in lace. It is generally in the same price range as other lycra fabrics. Color choices are black or white. The lace makes very pretty sleeves. Lycra and other stretch fabrics are wonderful media for creativity. Beading on stretch fabric requires that you knot and cut your thread often so that you do not lose the stretch in the garment. Be sure and secure all trim carefully.

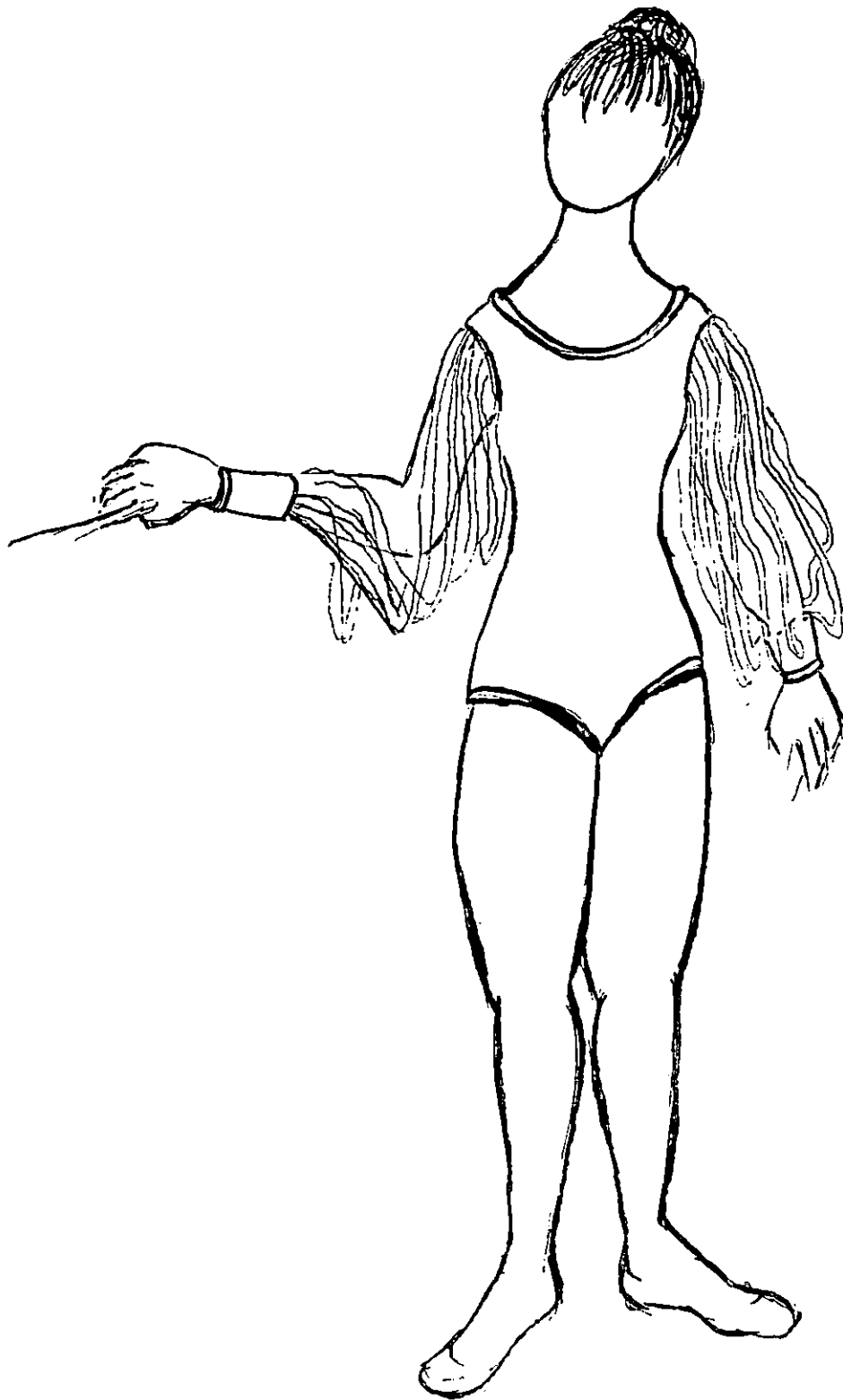
The important thing to remember when designing constructing and decorating dancewear is that everything must be anchored to the costume and the costume must be secure on the dancer. A bead, a ribbon, a feather or a rhinestone on the stage floor is a hazard to the dancer. Sewing trim on is the safest. I have not found a fabric glue that is really good to use on the stretch fabrics.

Adding on is not the only way to trim. You can take away also. While working with a dance company with limited funds I was able to create a set of costumes from a set of leotards that had been put away because the sleeves were too tight. Instead of removing the sleeves (which was an option) I cut long slits in the sleeves and attached some ribbons at the shoulders. The costumes moved in an interesting way with the dancers (figure A5). The director was pleased and so was I. Much to my surprise they washed well even though the slits had raw edges. A set of leotards which are short but fit otherwise can have a band of color or a band of stretch lace added.

As you make leotards and unitards you will find that as time goes by you will be able to look at a dancer and make him/her a leotard or unitard without a pattern.

Figure Caption

Figure A5. Leotard with slit sleeves.



Appendix B

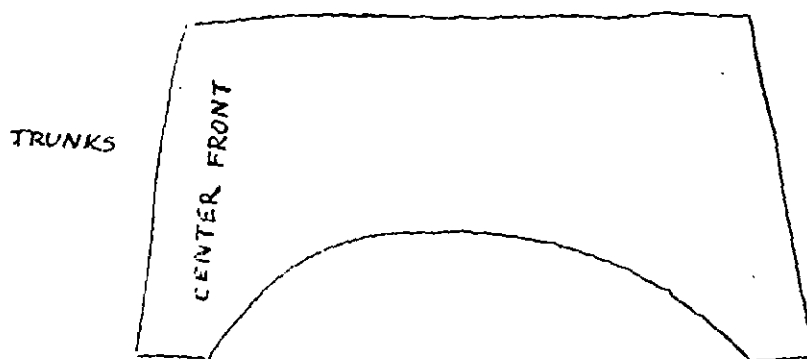
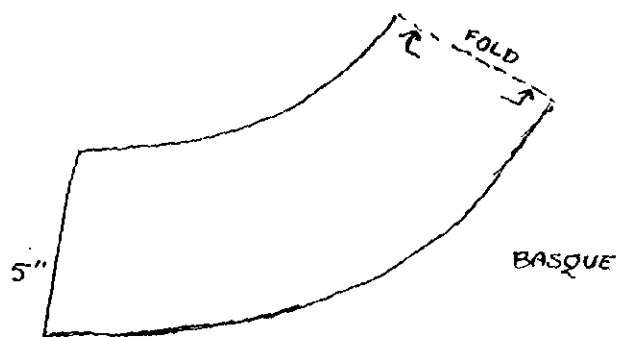
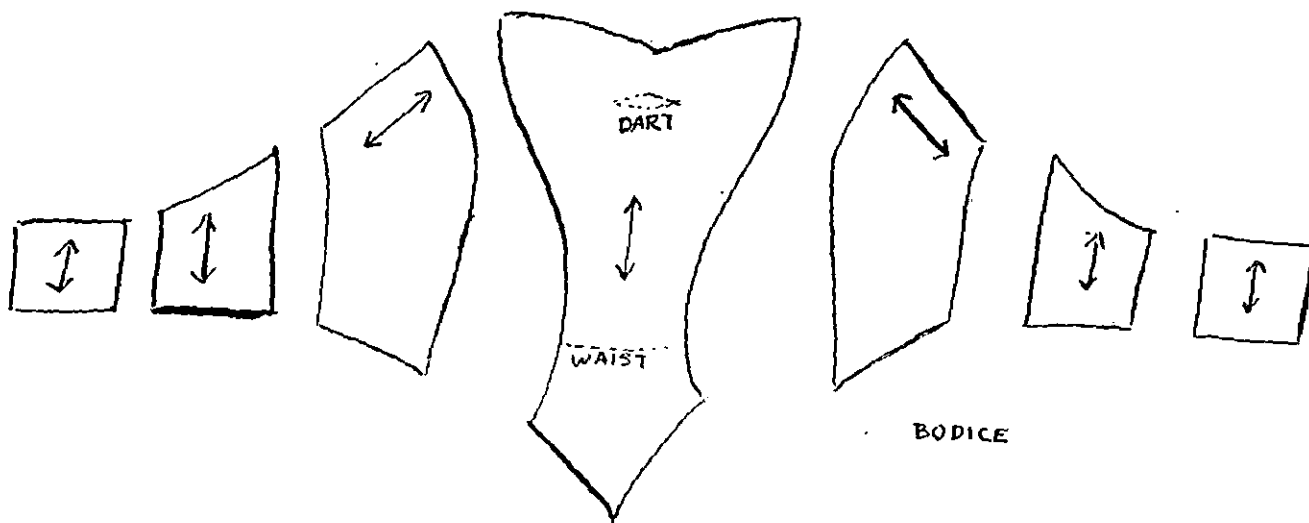
The Tutu

The first tutu I made I approached almost as a spiritual experience. I was afraid and excited at the thought of this undertaking. Before we start on this adventure, I shall tell you the big secret of the tutu. It is not difficult to make; it just takes time. This is not information to spread around. We don't want everyone running around making tutus.

You will have to make your own pattern. There are three main parts. You will need a couple of yards of muslin for this. Figure B1 shows all of the pieces of each part. Begin with the Basque and cut the basic shape as illustrated. Next you will cut the bodice. Cut as illustrated or find a commercial pattern that shows the same pieces. There should be plenty to choose from in the bridal and formal section of the pattern books. When you cut the pieces in muslin leave extra fabric on all sides. Using the measurements of your dancer, follow the illustration for the trunks and cut a pattern from the muslin. Baste the two pieces of the trunks together at the center front, three or four inches up the center back, and in the crotch. You need now to fit this to the dancer before you make your final pattern. The dancer needs to wear whatever she will be wearing under the tutu. These trunks should be a little big on the dancer sewing on the frills will cause the net to pucker some. Make sure the fit at the hips is loose and allow some room in the back for closing the trunks. Do not worry about fitting the waist. You do want to make sure that the leg openings are cut high enough in the front and on the sides for comfort while moving. The back should cover the whole seat area.

Figure Caption

Figure B1. Pattern pieces for a tutu.



Make notes and pin to fit. Before you begin to fit the basque, baste to the top edge a $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 inch wide piece of grosgrain ribbon or petersham as a waistband. It should be the same as the waist measurement plus 4 to 6 inches long. Center on the center front of the basque. This ribbon must be pinned tight on the dancer. The extra ribbon is for overlapping in order to fasten. The basque must be perfectly smooth. Make as many little darts at the top as is necessary to make it smooth. You may need to remove the ribbon and baste again. After you get the basque smooth, you will want to make sure that the bottom edge of the basque is parallel to the floor all around the dancer. Getting this line straight now should prevent a tutu being lopsided. A lopsided tutu does not look good. When you have established this line mark it onto the trunks. You have now marked the line of the top frill of your tutu.

The bodice pattern is last to be fitted and it is fitted with the other two parts still in place on the dancer. Baste or pin together the center front with the front sides. Pin together backs and side backs; then pin together at center back. Pin elastic for shoulder straps to help with fitting. Position the front pieces on the dancer. When center front is in position, make sure that the front seams are lined up directly over the center of each breast. Lining up the center back of the pattern on the center back of the dancer, pin the front and the back together so that they meet directly under the center of the arm. Mark all of the pieces where they come together. Shorten or lengthen top and bottom as needed. Make another pattern off of each tutu part. Allow for seams: $\frac{5}{8}$ inch at the top and bottom and seam over breast. Leave a little more for the side back seams and 2 to 3 inches each in the center back and side seams. The trunks will

need a little more than 5/8inch all around with a little extra in the center back for overlapping. To the basque add 5/8inch all around with 3inches at center back.

You should have 8 to 12 yards of net or tulle or a combination of the two. When buying net, shop around as quality varies greatly. If you are making a white or black tutu check out petticoat net, as it is heavier and stiffer. If you are going to combine net and tulle start at the bottom with the stiffer (net) and finish with tulle. Because tulle is so much lighter, if you want to make the entire tutu with it, you will have to make each frill double thickness.

The fabric for the bodice and basque requires some careful shopping also. Since you are only going to need 1.5 yards, you can splurge here. Get something nice, but something that works with your design. There are a few precautions to keep in mind while picking this fabric. They are safety factors that are especially important if the dancer will be partnered. Since dancers like to be caught when they fly through the air toward a partner, don't make the basque and bodice out of slick fabric. Avoid fabrics which have fibers that will cut the hands of a partner. Some decorative and metallic threads will cut. After you go to all the effort of making a tutu you don't want blood on it.

If you are going to use a different fabric for the top skirt (frill) you will need 3 to 4 times the length of the frill depending on the width of the fabric. Also allow extra if you are going to use any of the fabric anywhere else on the tutu for trim.

We will begin with the trunks. Did you remember to put the cat up this time? Use your pattern and cut 2 to 4 thicknesses of net. Stitch around each piece to join all

of the thicknesses of fabric. Join the two pieces center front. Now turn under raw edge of the seam and top stitch. Transfer the line of the top frill to the trunks. Mark in the rest of the frill lines using Figure B2 as a guide. Set aside and start to cut the frills.

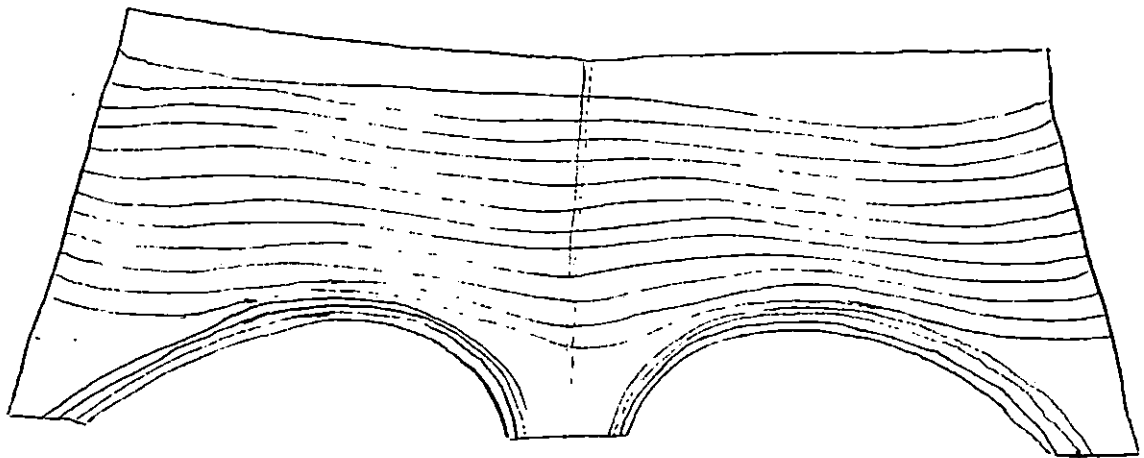
I have two ways of cutting frills. The first is on a one-inch grid cutting board, the tabletop size. The other is on a tile floor. If you use the floor you will have to make some inch marks on the tiles, but you will have your straight edges to go by. Frills are pinked. I have a pair of scalloping shears that I use. I like the look better than the pinked edge. Most net and tulle comes in 54inch or 72inch widths. Each leg will have two rolls of leg frills. If I am combining tulle and net in a tutu I use the tulle on the leg frills for the comfort of the dancer. For each leg frill (you will have four) cut one width 1 1/2 inches in length. Put together and label. The next frill you cut will be a supporting frill so you will want the stiffer net if you are combining net and tulle. If you are using only tulle you will want to start with double thicknesses of tulle at this point. Cut 3 or 2 widths 11/2inches long of either 54 or 72inch width fabric. Roll pieces together and label #1.

Cut the next 11 frills and label as follows:

	54inch fabric	72inch fabric	length of frill
Frill #2	3 widths (20)	2 widths (18)	2 inches
#3	3 widths (20)	2 widths (18)	3 inches
#4	3 widths (20)	2 widths (18)	4 inches
#5	3 widths (20)	2 widths (18)	5 inches
#6	4 widths (27)	3 widths (27)	6 inches

Figure Caption

Figure B2. Trunks showing spacing for frills.



#7	4 widths (27)	3 widths (27)	7 inches
#8	4 widths (27)	3 widths (27)	8 inches
#9	4 widths (27)	3 widths (27)	9 inches
#10	4 widths (27)	3 widths (27)	10.5 inches
#11	4 widths (27)	3 widths (27)	11 inches
#12	4 widths (27)	3 widths (27)	12 inches
Top layer	4 widths (27)	3 widths (27)	12.5 inches

If the tutu is to have a wire hoop it will go in frill #8 so you will need to cut casing for that frill. It will be the width of the frill and 2 inches long. The top layer can be a more elegant piece of fabric or an extra layer of tulle depending on your design. We build a tutu with the back and crotch seams open. Starting with the leg frills and working to the top frill line all frills are sewn on with the gathered edge down and the full edge toward the top of the trunks. Gather in the manner that works best for you. I prefer to zigzag stitch over dental floss.

I find that machine gathering tends to get caught in the net; pulling the dental floss through the zigzags is a lot easier and the dental floss won't break mid gather. In order to space your gathers evenly mark the trunks as in figure B3. Stitch bias binding on the legs of the trunks. Stitch leg frills as in figure B4. You have marked lines for spacing the gathers on the trunks. Gather as you sew. On frill 1 you will gather 20 inches into each section you have marked if the net is 54 inches wide or 18 inches if the net is 72 inches wide. The number in parenthesis following the number of widths to include in each frill refers to the number of inches that you will need in each of the

Figure Caption

Figure B3. Spacing for gathers on tutu trunks.

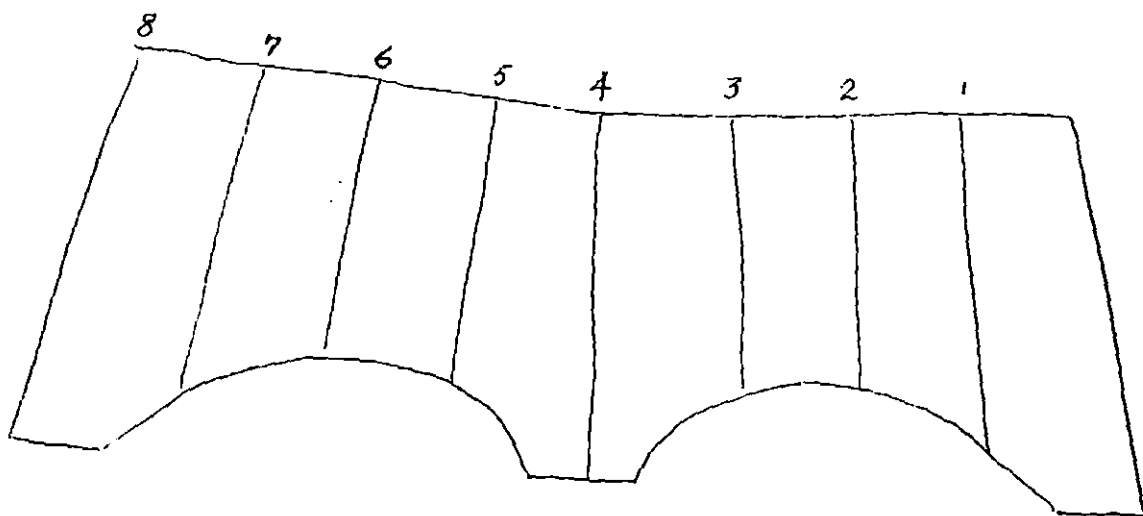
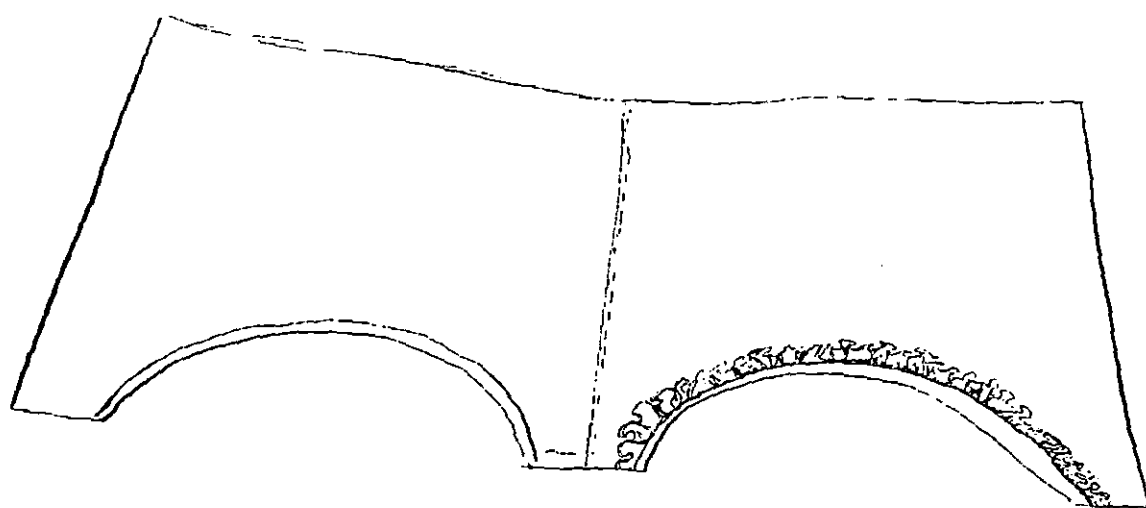


Figure Caption

Figure B4. Placement of leg frill on trunks of tutu.



8 sections on the trunks in order to space the gathers evenly. Figure B5 illustrates this. Continue adding frills in the same manner. Frills will be about ½ inch apart. If a wire is to be in the tutu you will need to sew the 2inch casing in the middle of the frill before you gather or attach to the trunks. I put the casing on the frill anyway, as I may decide to add the wire at a later time. Where widths of net come together overlap the pieces. By the time you get that 12th frill on the trunks you should be an expert at sewing on frill.

Those last frills were not easy to get through the sewing machine, but you did it! Don't be surprised if your fingers are sore from gathering all of that net. You have gathered about 70 yards. You are not finished with the frills yet. As you look at the trunks you will see some bare spots below the first frill; you will need to cut, gather and fill in those spots with frills. Now you will need to stitch up the back. Stitch up to the first frill. Open the seam and stitch flat. Stitch the crotch seam, fold under and top stitch by hand. Open the bias binding and run narrow elastic through. Leave the ends long and tighten at your next fitting.

As proud as you may be of what you have just done, you will need to set it aside and work on the other two parts. Start with the basque. Refer to figure B6. You have your pattern. Cut two of these, one of the fabric you will use in the bodice (the pretty fabric that the audience will see) and one of a cotton broadcloth or twill. I like broadcloth because it comes in a lot of colors and is easy to match the color of the outside of the basque and the bodice. Sometimes, depending on the outer fabric, I will use a double thickness of broadcloth or make an interfacing of several layers of net. If

Figure Caption

Figure B5. Placement of first frill using the spacing lines for the gathering as a guide.

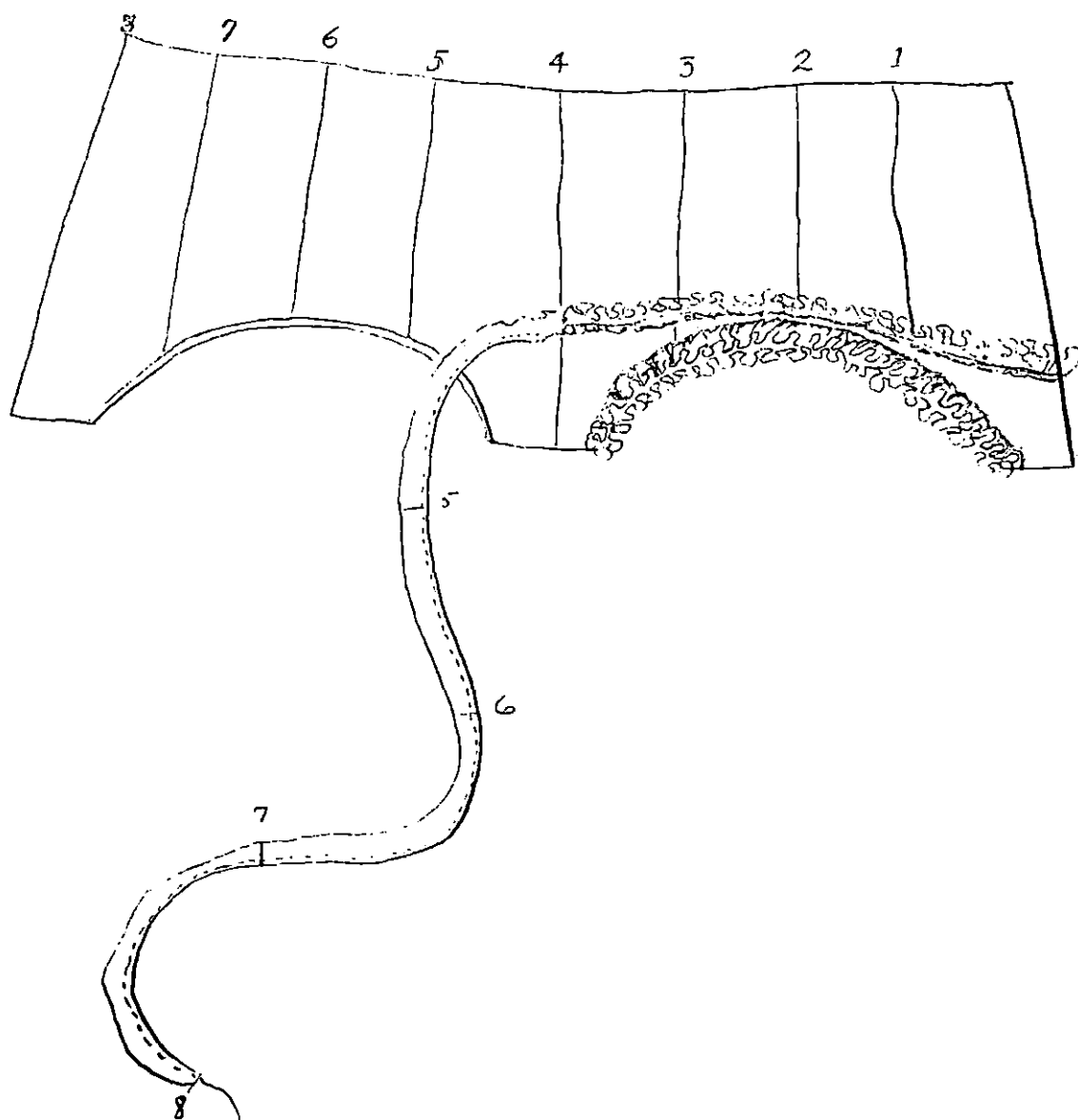
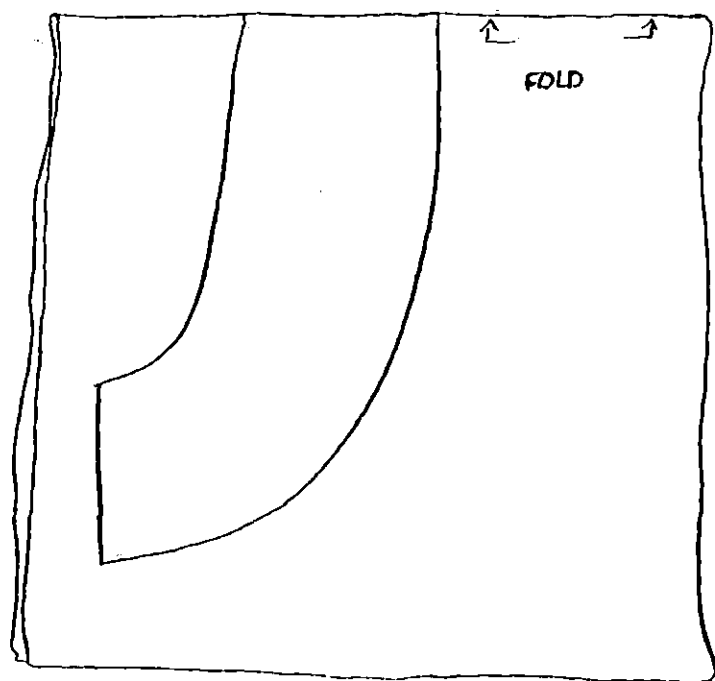


Figure Caption

Figure B6. Pattern placement for cutting basque.



you do use the net layers, quilt the layers together so that you do not have to chase them all over the sewing machine while putting the basque together. Baste the lining and the outer fabric together and baste the petersham or ribbon at the waist. Fit this with the trunks before you go any farther. Is the basque smooth and is the tutu straight? Turn under lower edge to match top gathers of last frill. One thing before you get upset: your frills probably look more like a puff ball than a tutu. Don't worry, we will take care of that later.

If everything works, mark the center back on each side of the basque. If something does not work, fix it now. The basque is now ready to finish. I attach bias tape at the bottom, trim and turn so that none of the tape shows and then hem by hand. Some people attach matching piping to the edge where the basque meets the top frill. Either way works. Attach the petersham or ribbon. Turn the left side under at the center back. Either turn the right side under $\frac{1}{4}$ inch and stitch, or finish edge on serger. We are going to finish this tutu with hooks and eyes. I have found from experience that zippers and dancers don't mix. A caught or broken zipper can present all kinds of horrors back stage. Save the zippers for your own clothes. Fit the basque and trunks again. Is everything still straight and smooth? Pin the two parts together. Secure the two parts together by hand. Set aside and get your pattern for the bodice.

Refer back to figure 1 and the pattern you have made for cutting directions. Cut each piece from each of the fabrics you used for the basque. You may want to add some extra thickness to the bodice. Quilt together what you add and to avoid extra bulk cut to fit within the seam lines and not extend beyond. Baste together. Attach

elastic for straps and fit. Are all of the seams lined up correctly? Is it smooth? Does it fit snugly? Make corrections and mark on the underlining fabric. Stitch pieces together on the machine and remove the basting. Clip seams at bust line only. Press all seams open. Finish the top and bottom by attaching bias tape and turning it under so that it does not show. Trim. Hem by hand. If you want a more defined bust line you can gather as much as is needed in the center front of the bodice. Stitch a piece of twill tape to the backside, center front of bodice to hold gathers in place or you may use a dart as is shown in figure 1.

Next is the boning. About two yards of boning will be enough for one bodice. Boning is sewn in by hand and covered. Refer to figure B7 for placement. Pad ends of boning for the comfort of the dancer. Reattach elastic straps. I use ¼ cotton swimwear elastic and allow the dancer to apply makeup to the straps. You can also dip the elastic in a tea bath.

Before you do anything else you need to decorate the bodice and/or the skirt now. Be sure that all decorations are anchored securely. Be sure also that your decorations can not cause injury to a partner of the dancer. Some trims can cut the hands of a partner so choose wisely. Often the design of the bodice calls for a deeper plunge at the bust than is practical for a dancer. The solution is to stitch a panel of flesh tone fabric onto the bodice where the plunge should be and then decorate as though it were a real plunge as in figure B8.

We are almost finished. It is time for another fitting. After you have the basque securely and correctly in place. Put the bodice on over it. Fold under the left side of

Figure Caption

Figure B7. Placing of boning in bodice of tutu.

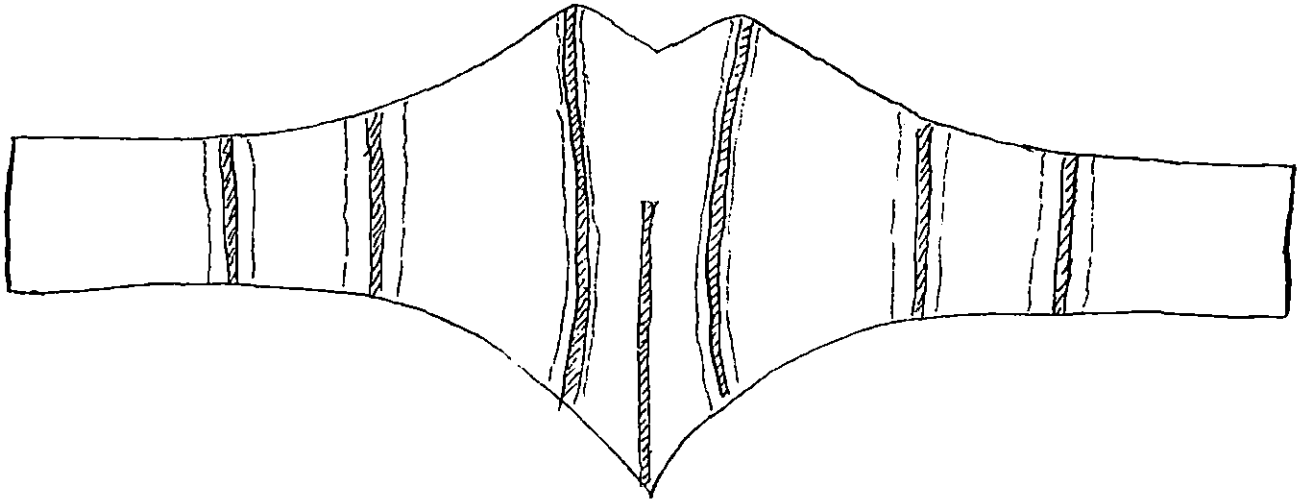
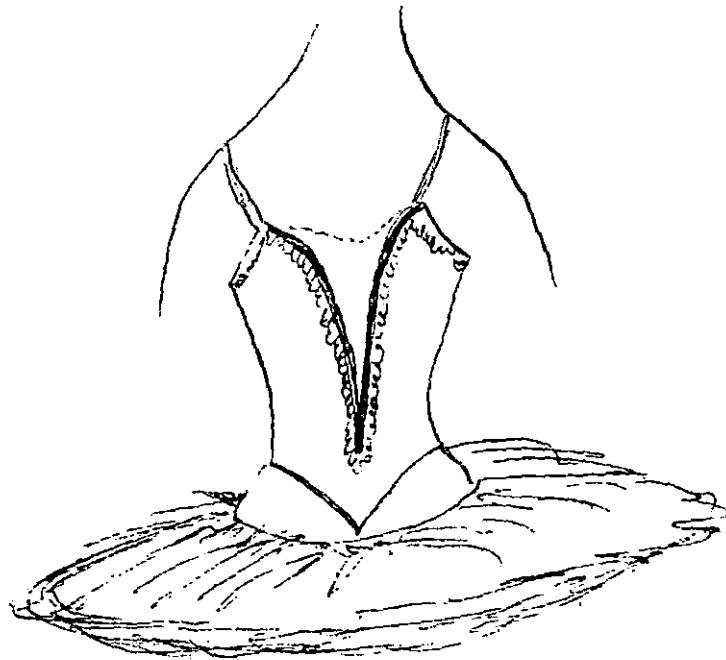
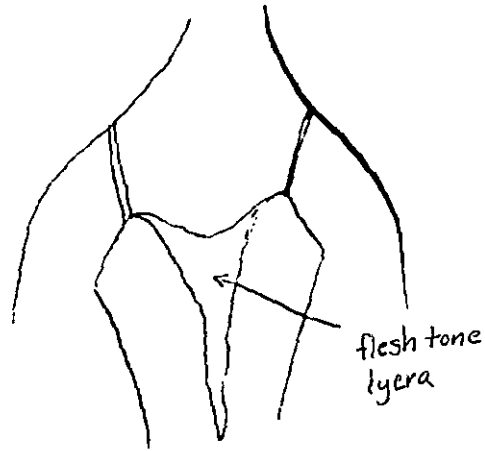


Figure Caption

Figure B8. The use of a flesh tone panel to give the appearance of an extreme plunge.



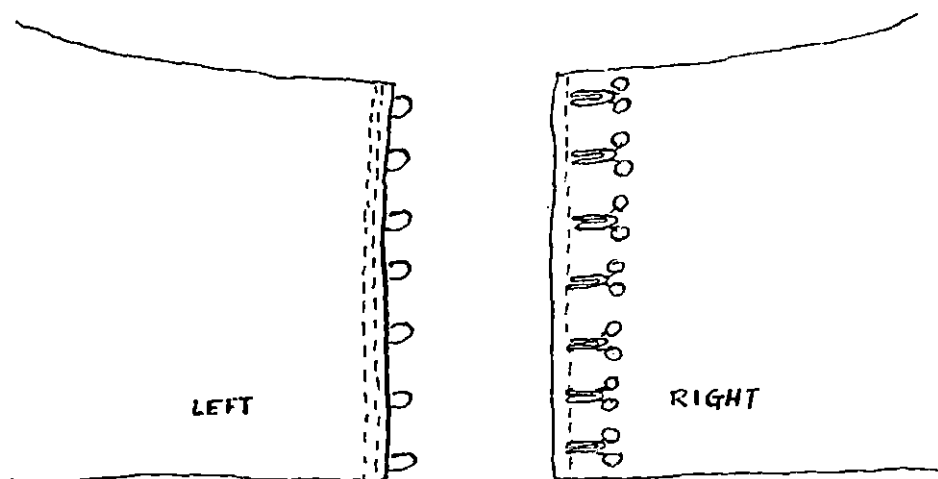
the bodice to match the left side of the basque. Match top at center back. The bodice must cover the ribbon or petersham. It must fit snugly. The point in the front must be centered and near the lower edge of the basque. Pin everything in place. Hand stitch or machine stitch the basque to the bodice, starting in the back and moving to the side seam on each side. Attach hooks and eyes to the back as shown in figure B9. It is time to fit the tutu again. Check all that you have done and if everything is right you can tack the center front point in place on the basque. Now, on the inside of the basque and directly under the point of the bodice attach a 1 to 1 1/2 inch wide piece of elastic that is between 12 and 14 inches long. Do this while your dancer is there. That piece of elastic is a crotch strap. Pull it reasonably tight between the legs and attach other end to the back of the basque under the hook side. You will also want to add the hoop now if you are going to use one. Overlap the ends and secure with tape. While the dancer is wearing the tutu you must pull the skirts or frills together. You will be making big stitches at about 7 or 8 inch intervals and about mid way of the frills. Don't stitch through all layers at a time. Stitch up from the hoop frill to the top layer and then stitch downward from the hoop frill.

Now you may add sleeves if you wish. Remember to always store a tutu hanging upside down.

You have just made a classical tutu. Let's make a romantic tutu now. It is much easier. The bodice is just the same as the bodice for the classical tutu. You can make it without the point if you choose. Make the basque the same as with the classical tutu. It will not show but you still need to match the color with that of the net

Figure Caption

Figure B9. Placement of hooks and eyes on bodice of tutu.



and/or tulle. Mark 4 lines, each an inch apart, around the basque. For four layers of 54 inch net and/or tulle you will need about 10 yards of fabric, but let's measure first. Measure from the waist down to the floor. A Les Sylphid skirt is 11 inches from the floor and is cut in scallops. A Swan Lake skirt is 13 inches from the floor and is cut in points. See figure B10. Remember when you cut the skirts if the fabric is 54 inches wide, you will need three widths per skirt. The skirt under the top skirt will be 1.5 inches shorter than the top skirt. Each skirt below will also be shortened in the same manner. As you cut each skirt, label as with the classical tutu. Gather and attach to the basque overlap each width of net as with the classical tutu. You will attach the bodice to the basque. Figure 11 shows how this should look. This time you will sew it all the way around, not just in the back. Add elastic straps. Add hooks and eyes down the center back. Add the trim and you are finished.

Figure Caption

Figure B10. Length of Romantic tutu.

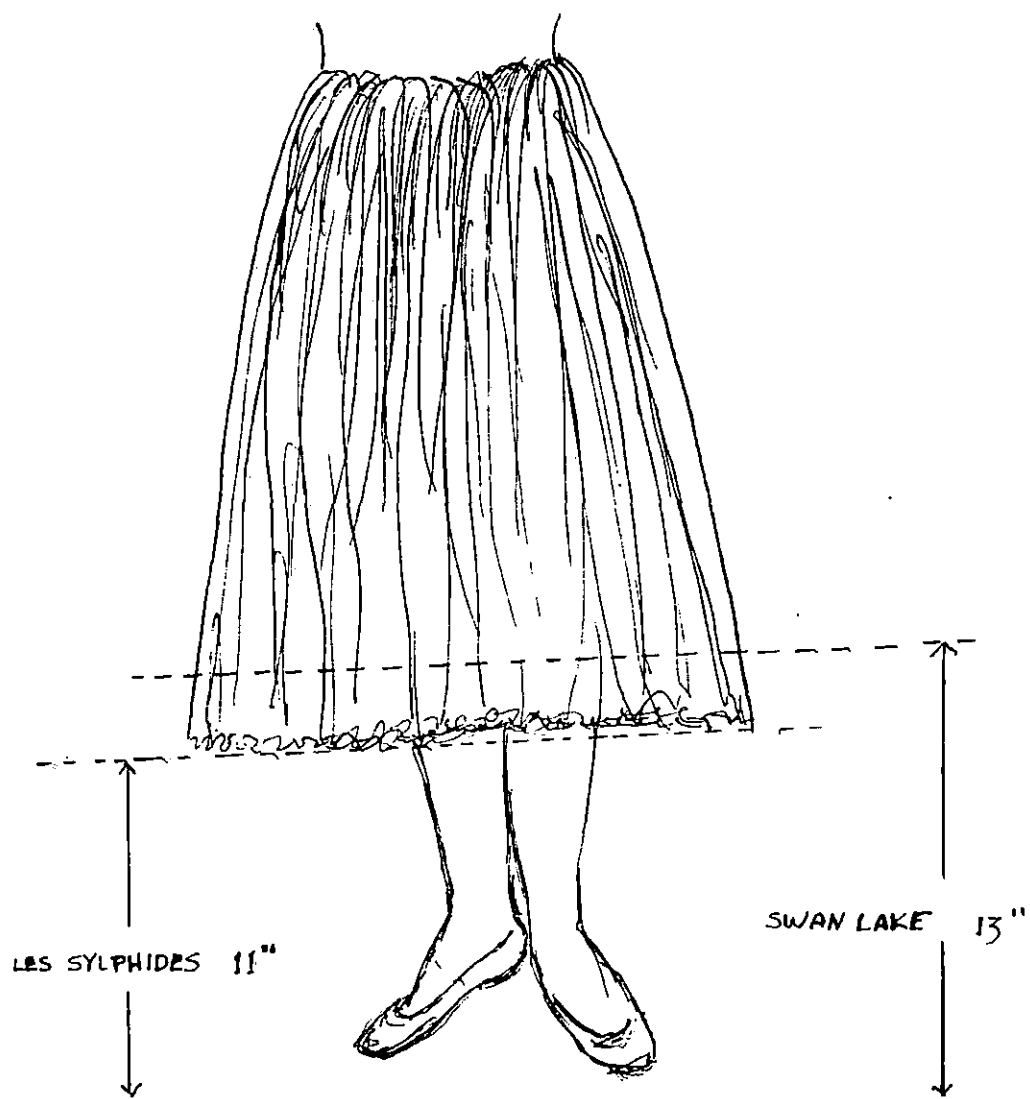
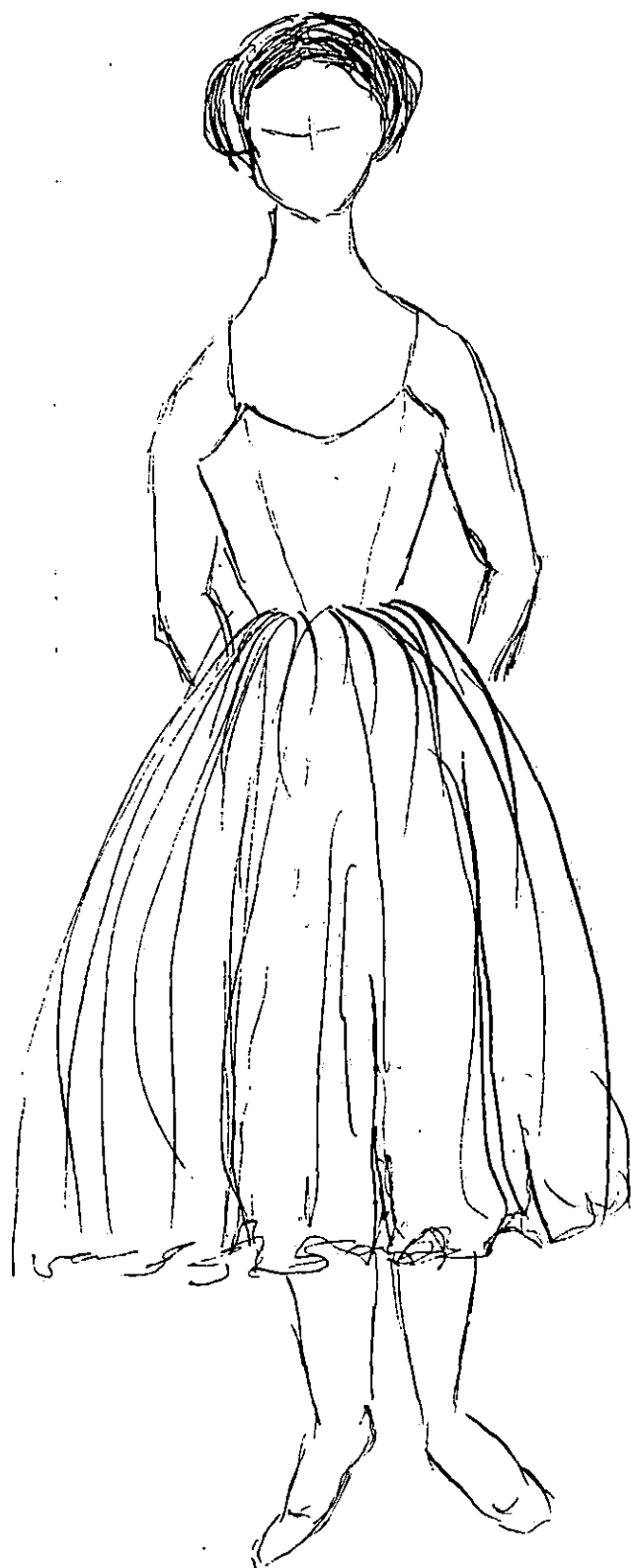


Figure Caption

Figure B11. The finished Romantic tutu.



Appendix C

Skirts and Add-Ons

With creativity, a leotard and a skirt can become a costuming work of art. The leotard and skirt are very basic elements in the female dancer's own wardrobe. The costuming possibilities go as far as the imagination will allow. If you make your own leotards and skirts you increase your ability to bring your designs to life. If you dye your own leotards dye enough extra stretch fabric to make a waistband in case you want to add a skirt to make the leotard part of a costume. If you use a piece of leotard fabric for the waistband it looks more like the skirt is a part of the leotard and not something added. On stage the waistband will not show at all. You can also cut a leotard apart add a skirt and then put the leotard back together. If you do this cut the leotard as in figure C1. The cut line should dip very slightly in the front and dip deeper in the back. A deeper dip in the back with extra gathers of the skirt can be a very nice look.

The best way to determine where you will cut the leotard is to mark it while it is on a dancer. This technique has all kinds of uses. Figure C2 illustrates some of them. If you do not want to cut the leotard you can sew the skirt directly onto the leotard. You can finish the top and bottom edge with a rolled hem (done on the serger or on a sewing machine). Top stitch to the leotard with a zigzag stitch, stretching the leotard as you sew. If you are adding a very full skirt this process is more difficult than

Figure Caption

Figure C1. Leotard with skirt sewn into leotard.

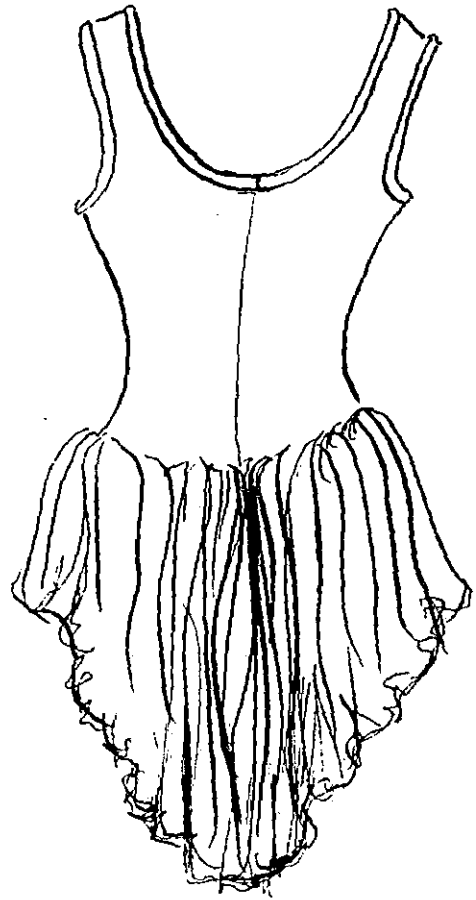
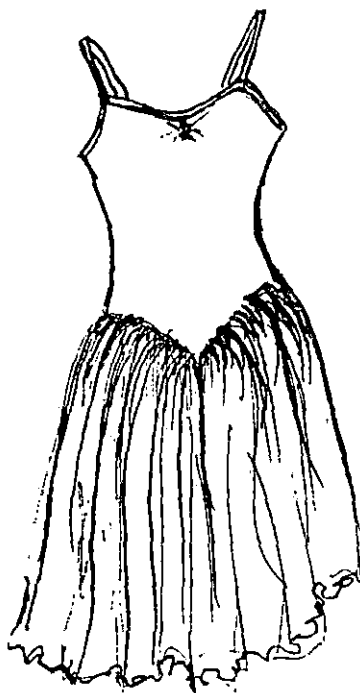
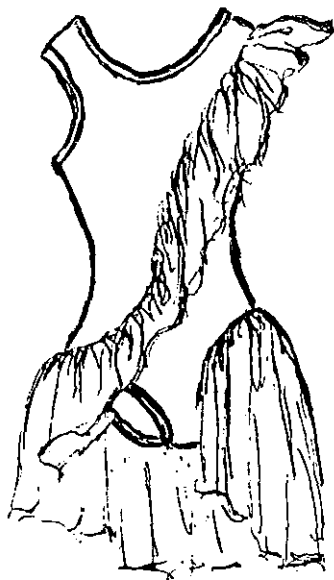


Figure Caption

Figure C2. Three possible ways of attaching a skirt to a leotard.



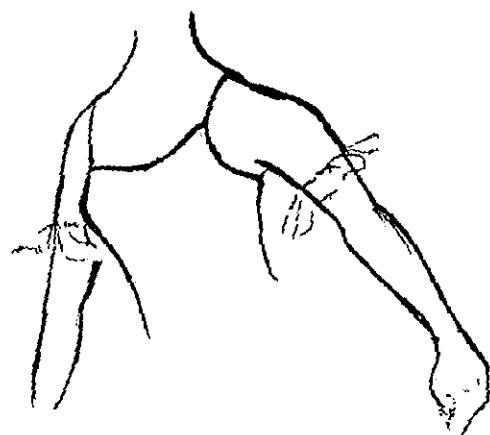
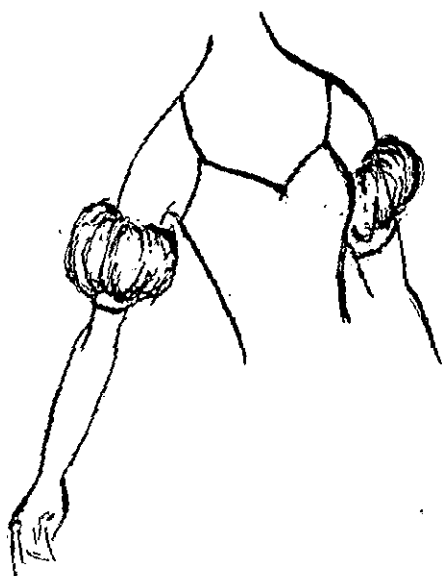
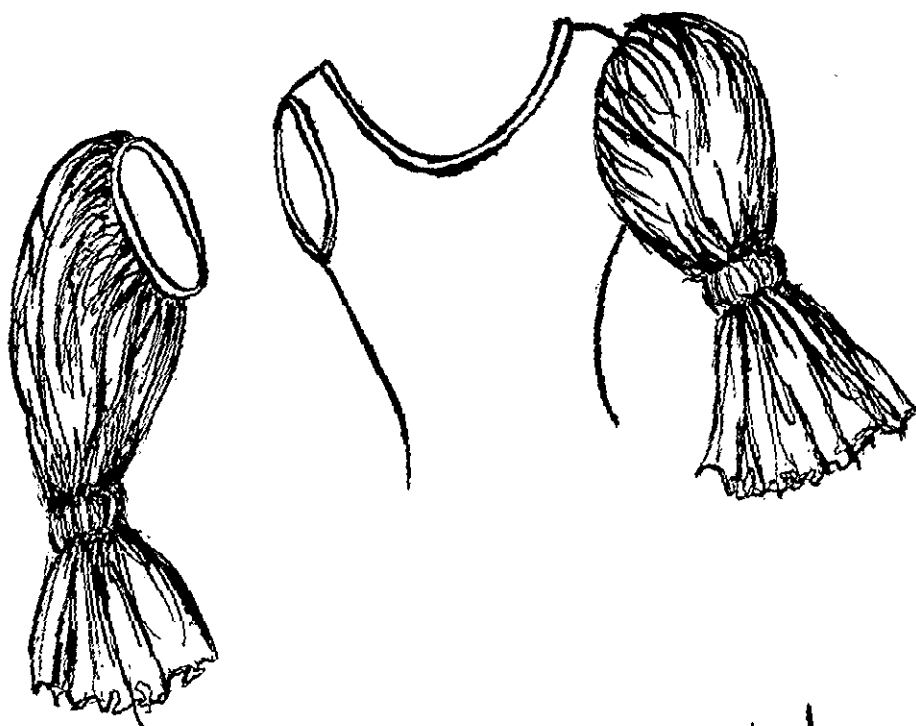
the cut apart and put back together method. If you choose not to finish the top edge, you can stitch the skirt on upside down as with the tutu.

Chiffon and China silk make some of the prettiest skirts. They are both a little pricey and if you need twenty full circle skirts; a less expensive fabric might be the answer. There are some lining fabrics that can be used instead of China silk, although I must admit I have never found one that moves quite like the real thing. Chiffon is a little easier to find a substitute for. Look at some of the nylons available. Some of them do not need to be hemmed. Nylon tricot offers something that few other fabrics offer. It comes in 108 inch widths. Many times I have found large quantities of all of these fabrics on the bargain tables in the fabric stores because most home sewers don't use them. Anytime I am in a fabric store I check all of the bargains. Stretch fabric often appear here at very good prices and even if the stretch and/or quality is not good enough for a leotard or unitard it may work well as a skirt or for sleeves. Some of my best design ideas have originated with a piece of fabric in the bargain bin. The problem with this is that once you buy the fabric, if you find you need more, you are probably out of luck. If you have not spent very much for it, the risk is worth it.

As you do with the leotards, save some of your scraps. You may want to use them to trim the upper part of the leotard, add sleeves, or use in a hair decoration. The best way to add sleeves to a completed leotard is to make the sleeve on a piece of elastic, as in figure C3. This can be easily added to or taken off of the leotard as needed. Remember too, that dancers' sleeves do not have to be attached to the costume. They can be merely worn on the arm; in fact, some dancers have been

Figure Caption

Figure C3. Sleeves.



observed wearing ruffles of net on their arms. Some artistic directors are very fond of these, so be careful about your comments concerning them. I once made a comment about the “silly” net ruffles without knowing that the artistic director thought they were important elements in a costume. The result being that I ended up making more of those “silly” things than a person should ever have to make just to redeem myself. Sometimes it is better to smile and nod, figure C4.

Returning to skirts, you are not limited to a gathered or circle skirt. You can also use a circle plus $\frac{1}{2}$ of another circle or even a double circle. You will want to be careful with weight as you increase the size of the skirt. You can also layer skirts, varying the color or length. Skirts can be hemmed, roll hemmed, serged, pinked, scalloped or bound. You can edge the hem with ribbon, bias tape, string sequins or beads. Be careful of the beads, they could become weapons on the edge of a fast moving skirt. The waist need not be cut out of the center of the circle. Figure C5 illustrates how this can be used in a skirt of several layers. Figure C6 shows a skirt made of squares which is layered.

You can make the skirt of free form shapes and that too will work. Figure C7 with several layers of skirts becomes a costume. In this illustration the edges can be cut and hemmed in one operation on the serger or they can be cut and fused by running the edge through a flame. I use an alcohol lamp. The fabric must be something that will melt, not burn. Lining fabrics and the nylons that we use as a substitute for chiffon fuse well. A very plain skirt of lining fabric can become very interesting if holes are cut into it and the edges are fused. You can add paint to the design as in

Figure Caption

Figure C4. Smile and nod.



Figure Caption

Figure C5. Layers of off-center skirts.

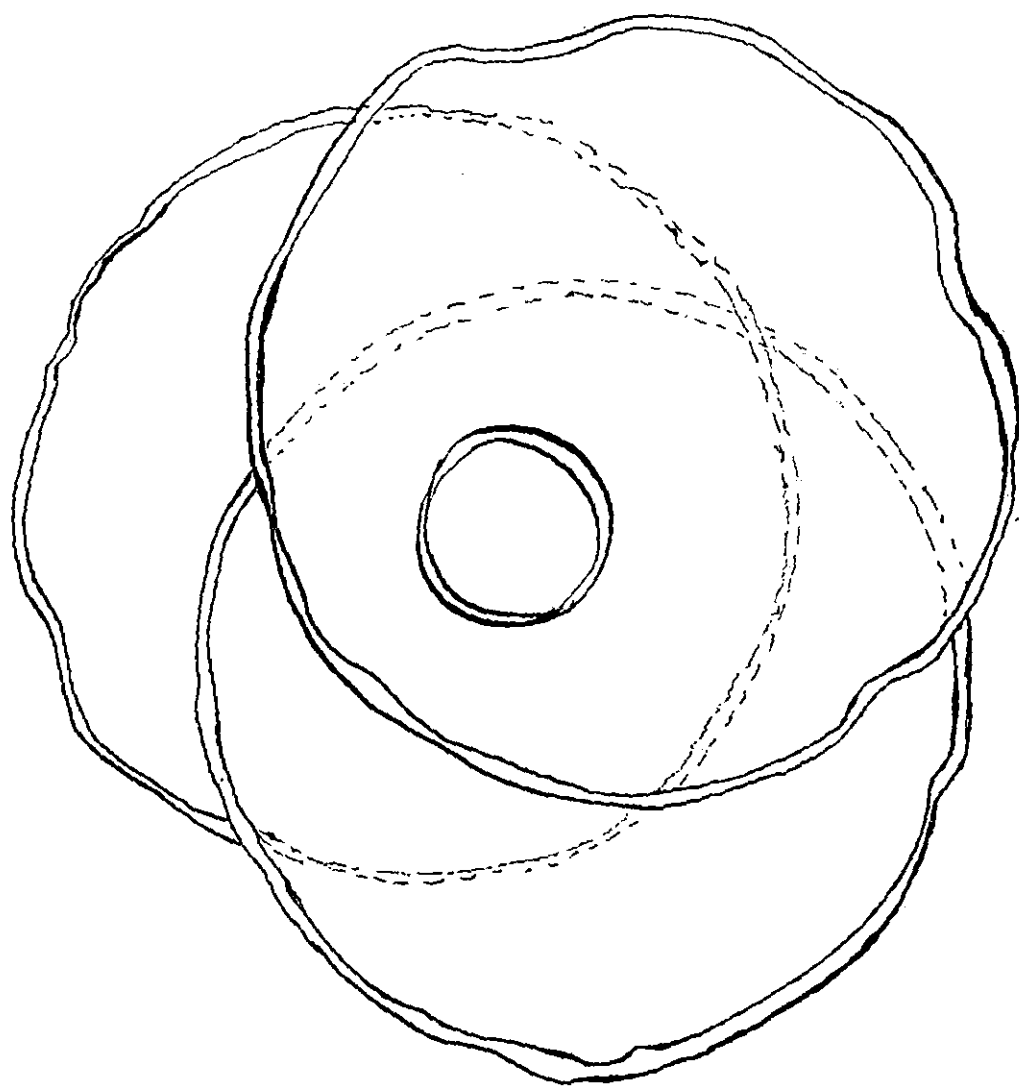


Figure Caption

Figure C6. Squares as skirts.

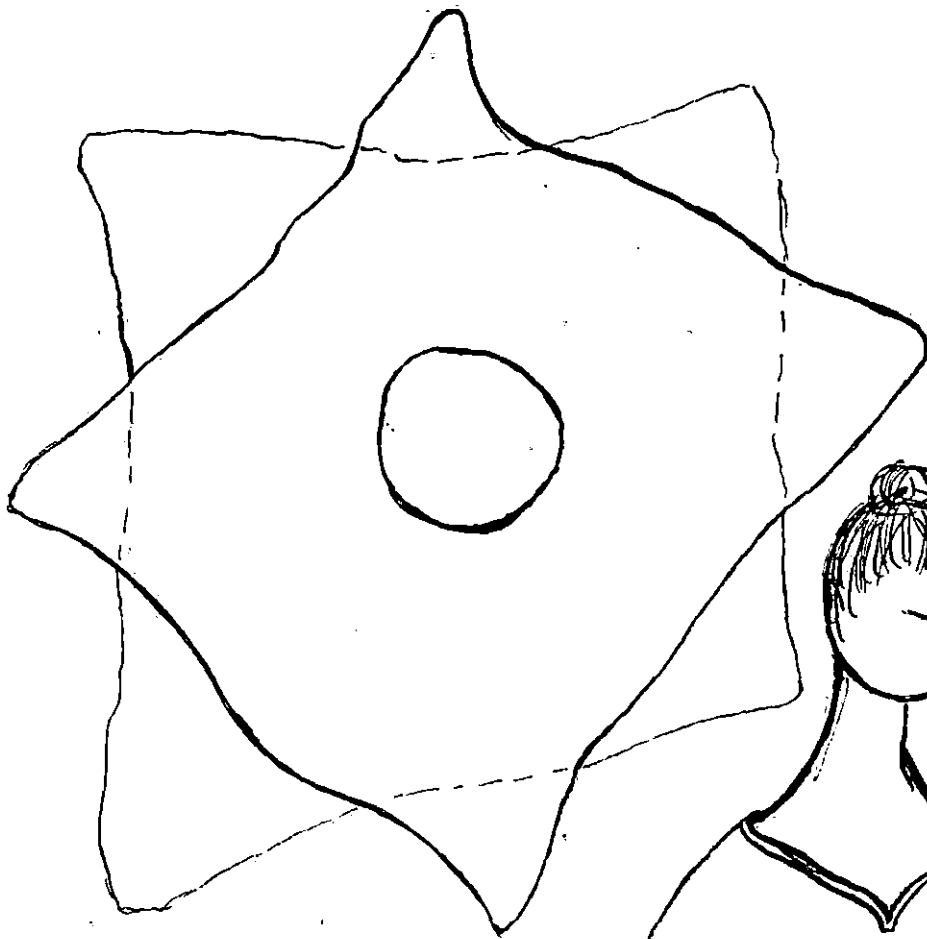


Figure Caption

Figure C7. Free form shapes to form a skirt.

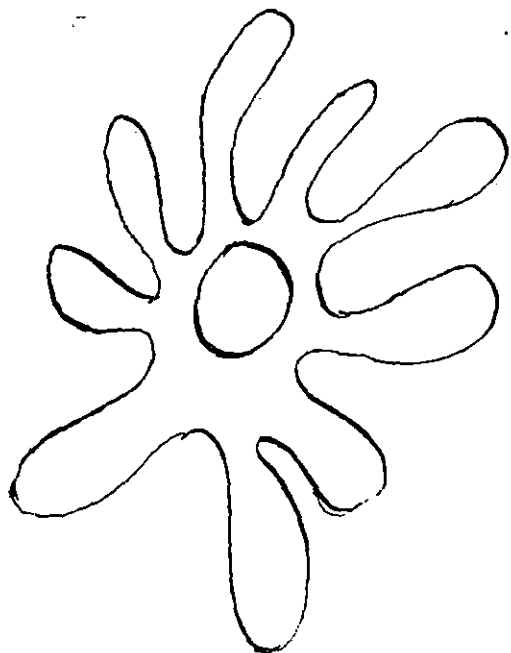


figure C8. You can do the same with a collar or sleeves. I like the texture of the fused edge. I keep a box of fabrics that can be fused. When time permits I cut into pieces 2 to 3 inches in diameter and cut other pieces into simple leaf shapes. I then fuse the edges. These can be strung together to form a very pretty garland to decorate a costume, in figure C9. I have another box of scraps that I use to make decorative elements on the serger. In this box I have metallics, brocades, laces, and other interesting fabrics. I cut and edge long slender strips of the fabric. I leave the thread tails attached. They can be used as in figure C10. I order catalogues from art materials supply houses. I am always on the lookout for something interesting to try. Any time I see a new craft item I try to think if there is anyway that I can use it on a costume. Dance costuming can be very confining as in the case of the tutu. There are just not too many ways you can make a tutu. Skirts and leotards give us a chance to do something different a chance to experiment. So, experiment! Have fun!

Figure Caption

Figure C8. Skirt using cutting, fusing and painting.

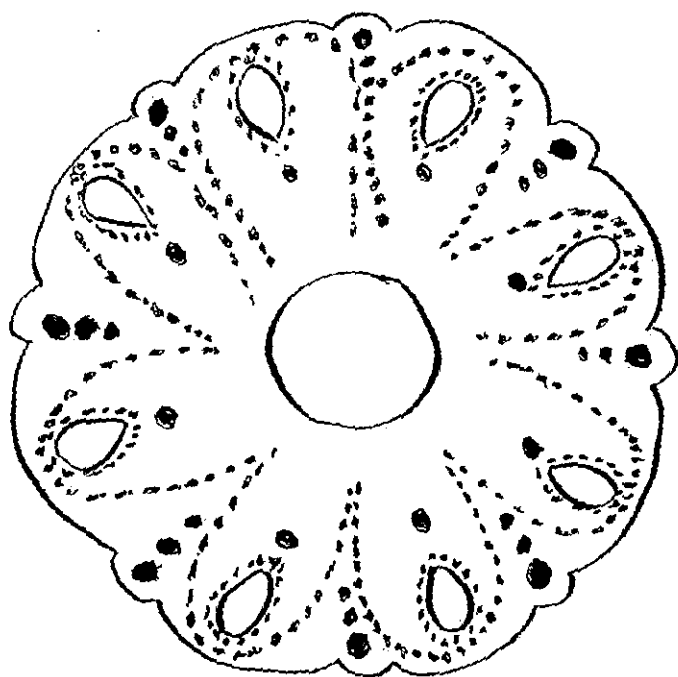
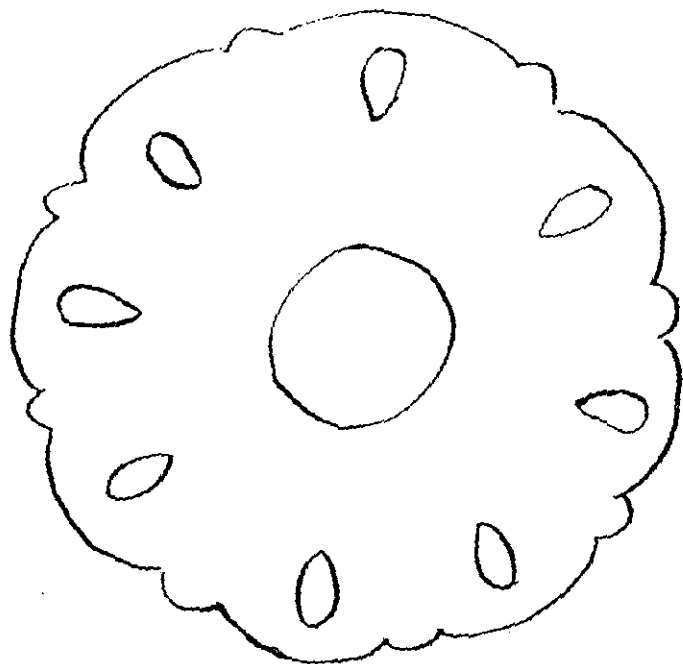
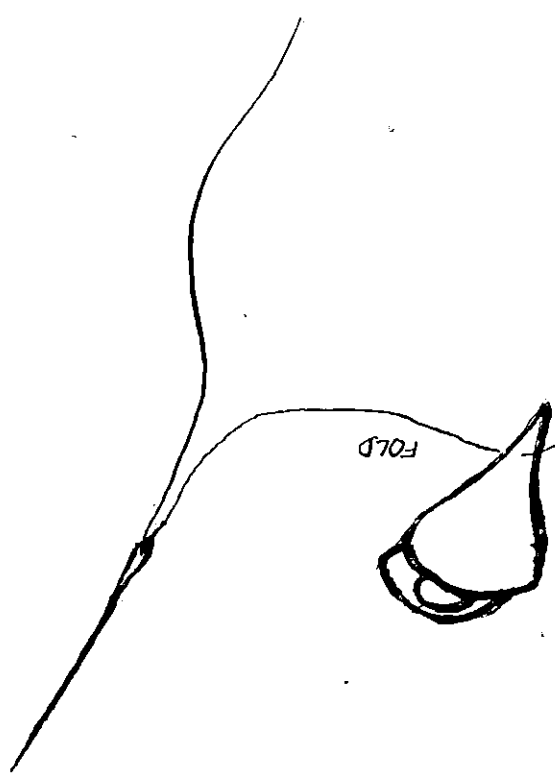


Figure Caption

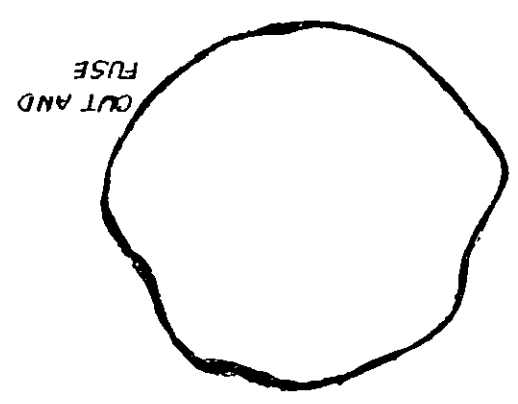
Figure C9. Construction of garland using fused fabric.



CUT AND FUSE



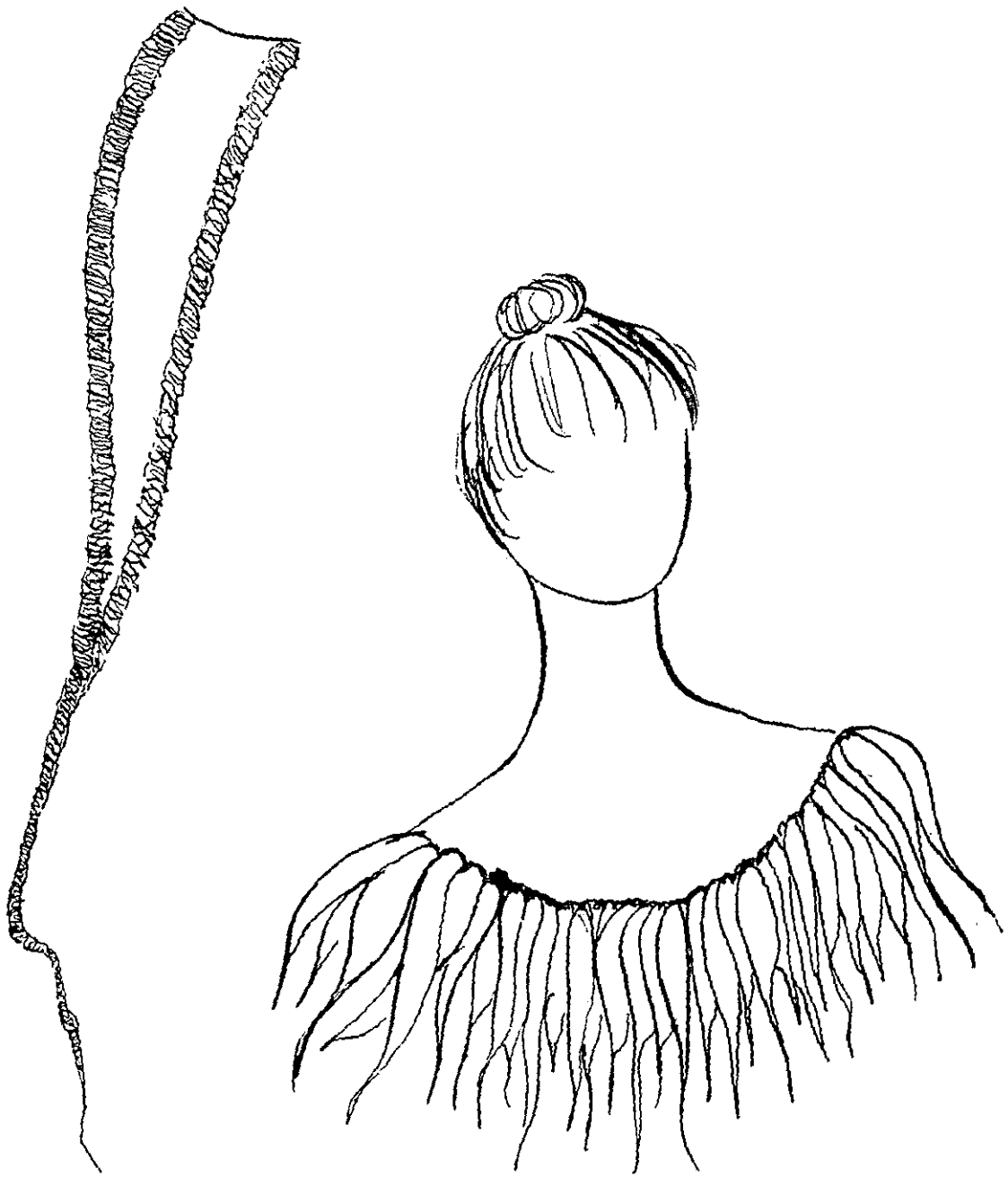
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CUT AND FUSE

Figure Caption

Figure C10. Decorative use of serged fabric.



Appendix D

Men's Costuming

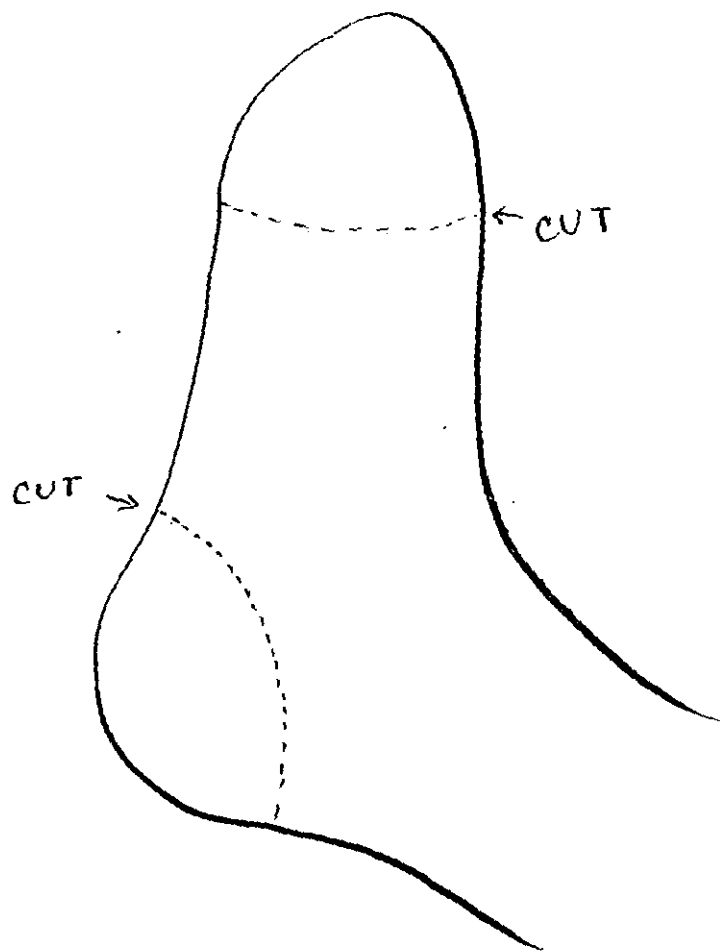
Men's costumes, for the most part, involve tights, tunics, and shirts. The tights are a far more important part of men's costuming than they are of women's. When you make the tights for men keep in mind that the tights are generally the costume from the waist down. With women's costuming, the tights are leg coverings and generally not much more significant. A man's ballet slippers will be the same color as his tights; therefore, you will be dyeing ballet shoes often.

Male dancers wear dance belts under their tights just like basketball players wear athletic supporters under their shorts. This does not mean that an athletic supporter can be used instead of a dance belt. Dancers furnish their own. The chances you being required to make one are rather remote. They come in black, white and flesh tone. Even though the dancer will be wearing a dance belt it is still a good idea to use as heavy of a stretch fabric as you can find. I make the top part of the tights long enough to reach the armpits of the dancer and then add elastic shoulder straps. Use a wide elastic for this purpose. Many dancers also like a piece of elastic to wear like a belt at the waist. This way the dancer has the option of rolling the tights to the waist.

If the dancer will be dancing barefooted, you can either cut the foot out leaving a stirrup (figure D1) or you can open up the seam in the bottom of the foot and roll it up into the ankle of the tights. Be careful with any cutting on stretch fabric. Cut things smaller than you think they need to be as the hole you cut will stretch just as the fabric stretches.

Figure Caption

Figure D1. Cutting lines for stirrup tights.



Since the male dancer does not generally wears pants, this presents the costumer with several problems. If the dancer is wearing a tunic, how do you keep it from riding up? If the dancer is wearing a shirt, what then? You can not tuck the shirt into the tights. We will try something else. Remember the basque you made for the tutu? You will need to make a basque to be sewn to the waist of the shirt. Make a basque of the same fabric as you make the shirt. Underline the same as you did for the tutu basque. Before you attach it to the shirt you will need to fit both on the dancer. Make sure you allow enough fabric at the waist to permit all the movement that the dancer requires. Open the back of the shirt above the opening in the basque and face it. The opening will have to be large enough to allow the dancer to get in and out of the shirt. You may close the opening in the shirt part only with velcro. The basque still needs to be closed with hooks and eyes. I have two patterns that I like for men's shirts. They are both Folkwear Patterns and can be ordered from Baer's in Louisville, Kentucky. One is the Poet's shirt. The other is the Missouri Boatman's shirt. Figure D2 will show how the man's shirt should look.

A wide elastic waistband can also be used, but the basque does stay in place better. If you use the elastic you can put it into casing made of the tights fabric. The other problem with this method is that you are limited to using the shirt only with those tights unless you change the waistband.

There is another man's shirt which can be made without a basque. Figure D3 will show you what it should look like. This shirt is very nice in a chiffon type fabric. It will look better over a tank top unitard than over tights. If you do make this shirt,

Figure Caption

Figure D2. Shirt on basque with tights.



Figure Caption

Figure D3. Shirt with sash.



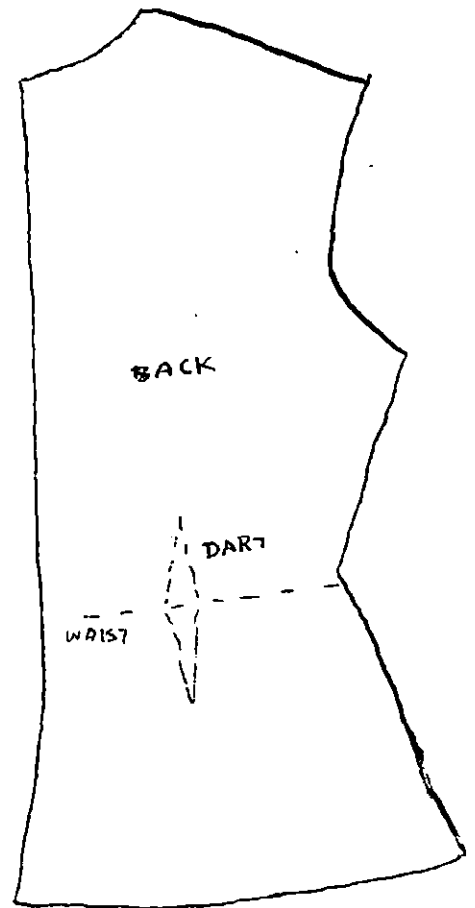
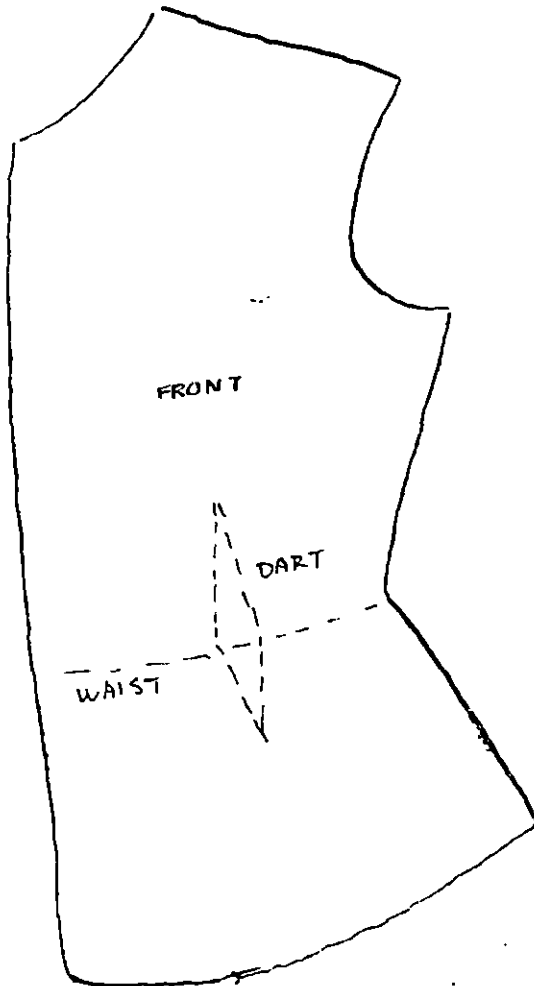
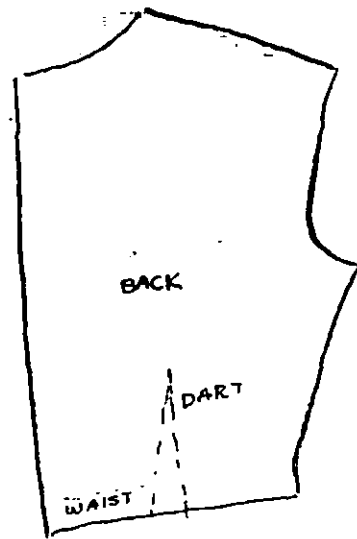
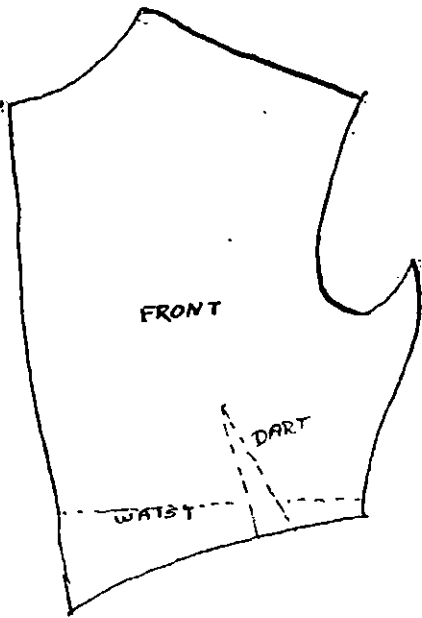
make the sashes long enough to wrap around the dancer twice. This extra length will give you, the artistic director and the dancer some options. You can cut them later if need be. Costumes need to rehearse too. The way things look in our minds and in the sketch pad are not always the same as how they look on a dancer in motion. This is not bad; sometimes we have wonderful surprises and everyone thinks we a brilliant. This is another time to smile and nod.

Speaking of rehearsals, are you going to rehearsals? You need to if you are not. I go to as many rehearsals as I possibly can. If I can see where costume problems will arise before I make my drawing, I have saved myself a lot of time and headaches. If you have worked in theatre costuming you know that it is important to attend rehearsal. It is even more important with dance. You are working without a script. You only have the music and the dancers in motion.

The third element to consider in a male dancer's wardrobe is the tunic. It is generally more formal than the shirt. While the shirt stays in place by the use of a snug fitting waistband, the tunic stays in place by being snug all over. This is a garment that can require as many fittings as a tutu. I can show you what the pieces of a pattern should look like (figure D4) but you will have to make your own for each dancer. Tunics can end at the waist or can extend beyond. If you are working with some young dancers, you may want to consider the longer tunic as the dancer may already be self-conscious about wearing tights. It is hard enough to find good male dancers and there is no point in traumatizing them with a costume that exposes them more than they are prepared for. As designer/costumers we can come up with many solutions to each

Figure Caption

Figure D4. Pattern pieces for tunic.



costume design problem. Some will make the dancers happier than others, so why not try to keep them happy. It will not make you a lesser designer.

The tunic can have sleeves in it like a jacket or it can be treated as a vest, in which you can add the shirt sleeves and shirt collar directly to the vest, making it all one garment. One word of caution: Be sure that the shirt fabric and the tunic fabric can be cleaned the same way or be prepared to separate them every time they need washing or cleaning.

When fitting the tunic, bring the under side of the arm as close to the arm pit as is possible without interfering with movement. Bring the shoulder opening as close to the arm as possible without interfering with movement. Line and interface as this garment will get rough wear. Use a combination of hooks and eyes, large snaps and buttons, depending on your design.

The fact that the man's costume is generally less elaborate than the woman's costume does not mean that it should be ignored and set aside to do at the last minute. If he is partnering, his costume should be designed at the same time as his partner's costume.

Appendix E

Headpieces and Hats

The dancer costumer can turn an ordinary costume into something magical with the right headpiece or hat. Allow yourself time for this project. It is fun and it will complete your costume. This part of the costume tends to be left until the last minute and one is left with a headpiece or hat that maybe works, but could have been special with a little more effort. As you design a hat or headpiece of any kind there are three things that you must keep in mind.

1. It must be anchored.
2. It must be as light in weight as you can make it.
3. It must not get in the way of the moving dancer.

All of these things dictate that you must attend rehearsals and that this important part of the costume must be tried before dress rehearsal.

You can create some very professional results with a minimum amount of materials. There are a number of things I always keep on stock:

1. A hat block (or as many as you can get a hold of) several styrofoam wig stands will also work.
2. Several yards of buckram (several different weights).
3. Hat wire (black and white) (try several different gauges).
4. Pliers (cutting, needle nose, and flat nose).
5. Any other wires that you think you might possibly use.
6. Heavy thread.

7. Floral tape and floral wire.
8. Elastic.
9. Plastic headbands, plastic combs hair pins, and bobby pins.
10. Lots of feathers (if you keep a stock of white ones, you can dye them.)
11. String sequins and loose sequins, beads and stones.
12. Trim, ribbons and cords.
13. A glue gun and lots of glue sticks.
14. Veil or tulle.
15. Anything else that you find that might be useful.
16. Scraps from costumes.
17. Felt.
18. Lace.
19. Hat sizing.

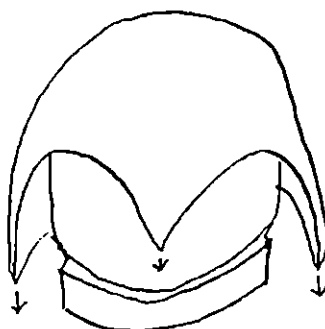
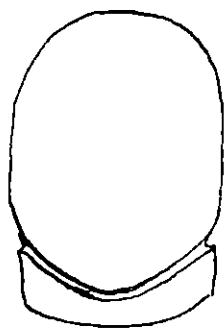
Any time I am in a fabric store I check not only the bargain fabric, I check the bargain trim. I only buy ribbon when it is on sale or in large amounts at wholesale. After Christmas is a wonderful time to buy trim in the fabric store. The prices are 50% to 75% off and you will probably be alone in the store because it is not the kind of store people think of for the big after Christmas sales. Buy trim for costumes and for headpieces. I buy these things when I find them at a good price not when I need them. Right now, I would be embarrassed to admit how many yards of sequins I have. I will say that it will take a couple of Nutcrackers to use them up. To be honest I probably will never have to buy sequins again.

The best way to start construction is with the comb or headband or that part of the headpiece that will be the anchor to the head of the dancer. Build on to the comb or headband rather than making the decoration and then trying to attach it to something later. Floral wire is good to work with on either one and floral tape is good to cover the wire. Some feathers dyed to match a costume can be wired together along with a few pieces of string sequins and a few pieces of ribbon all secured to a comb. Large spangles on the ends of wires work well in a design. None of these things would take much time if you have all the materials on hand. It would also finish the costume and look very professional. Combs and headbands may not always be needed. If you wrap the decoration with floral wire and floral tape often it can be secured to the hair with bobby pins.

A hat takes a little more time and often is a better solution to the costume design than the simple hair ornaments just mentioned. For a hat you will need the hat block, buckram, felt, hat wire, hat sizing, plastic wrap, pliers, trim, and elastic. Follow along with the illustrations in figure E1. Cut a piece of buckram and a piece of felt the same size. You will want a piece big enough that when you lay it over the hat block it will cover as much area as you want to be in your hat plus 2 or 3 inches in each direction. Put a piece of plastic wrap over the hat block. Get the buckram wet. Do this quickly as not to wash the sizing from the fibers. Wring it out and center on the hat block. Working on opposite sides at all time begin to pull downward on the buckram. Do not pull away from the hatblock. Pull down. Tie a loop of elastic around the hat block just below the edge of where the hat will be when finished. Continue to pull, but

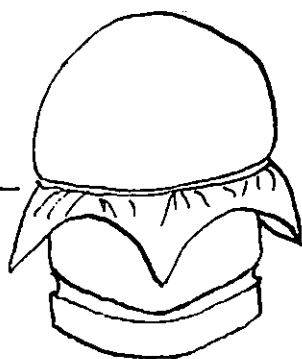
Figure Caption

Figure E1. Construction of hat with hat block.

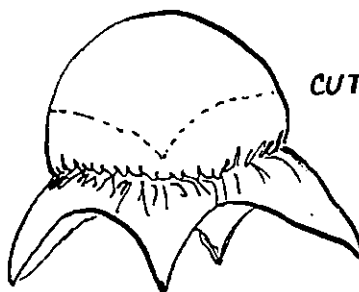


FELT OVER
BUCKRAM

PULL DOWN



ELASTIC



CUT LINE



now you will also want to be smoothing the wrinkles as best you can. When you have it shaped, wet and wring out the piece of felt. Place it over the buckram and under the piece of elastic. Repeat the stretching and smoothing process. Set aside and let it dry. This may take a day. You can speed the process by using the sun or other heat source. Remove carefully from the hat block making sure it is completely dry. Draw the shape onto the hat and cut off the excess fabrics. Stitch around the cut edge. Depending on how you are going to trim the hat you may want to stitch bias tape around the edge. This step may be more of a bother than is necessary unless the hat will get a lot of hard wear. Spray or brush the hat with sizing. At this point add the elements that will hold the hat in place. I usually hand sew a comb inside the hat and attach a chin-strap of ¼ inch cotton swimwear elastic. Decorate the hat. If a decoration needs to stand straight up on the top of the head a small hat is much more stable than a head band or comb. When you have your decoration wired together and ready to place on the top of the hat, cut a small opening into the top of the hat and run the wire into the hat. Twist the wire around inside the hat to make the design stand upright. Use hot glue gun to secure. Tape over wire on the inside and then glue in a lining.

Wire can be used alone to make a headpiece and it can be used with beads and spangles. You can, with you pliers and several different colors and thickness of wire, create a very nice crown. You can twist the wires together to get the shape you wish. If you want to go to the trouble and enjoy working with metal go ahead and solder the pieces together. If you hammer on the wire in order to flatten it in places, it will catch

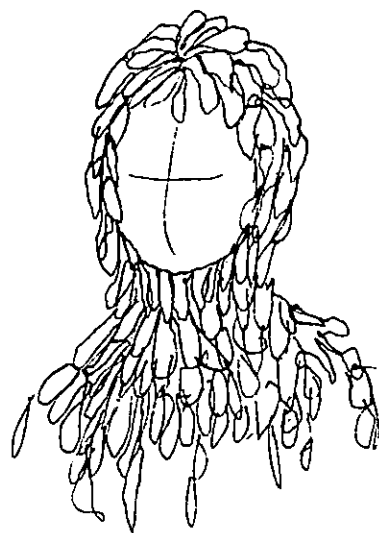
the light better than the untouched wire. Beads and spangles can be twisted or strung on to the wire.

There is one other method that I use on a regular basis. It is the hood. Stretch fabric works well for this construction. It is ideal for animal costuming whether you plan to use a mask or not. The most difficult part of the hood is deciding how it will join the rest of the costume. My suggestion is in figure E2.

The methods that I have mentioned here are the methods I use most often. There are many others, and you may come up with some very creative ideas on your own. The important things to remember are that: 1. This like any other costume piece must stay on the dancer and not get in the way. 2. You want to have the piece available for rehearsals to make sure that it works. 3. You need to see it in rehearsal. 4. It should be a part on the costume and not look like it was just added to the costume.

Figure Caption

Figure E2. A hood



Appendix F

Nutcracker on a Budget

Nutcracker is a ballet that can bring in sizable revenues for a dance company. The general public has heard of it, a fact that separates it from most other ballets. It is becoming a holiday tradition in many communities. Many dance companies and some dance schools present a Nutcracker year after year to packed houses. One of the reasons for the packed houses lies in the fact that there are many children in the production and that means many parents, friends and family in the audience. Some artistic directors will keep adding children to increase the audience until the stage manager and the costumer scream...NO more!

If you are working with a company that plans to finance all or most of their other productions from the income of Nutcracker, then you are going to want to present the best set of costumes possible for the least amount of money. This will take planning, creative thinking, careful shopping and flexibility. With any luck your artistic director will be flexible also. Present your ideas; explain why your idea is economical.

I have been doing dance costuming for eighteen years and I cannot remember a year that I did not do all or part of at least one Nutcracker. I also have no memory of doing one with a large budget. Big budgets and lots of time are only unfulfilled dreams for costumers, but you have probably already figured that out.

When I begin on a Nutcracker, I work on two fronts at the same time before I make my first drawing. This will require trust between the costumer and the director.

Since I have only three directors that I work with on a regular basis I have had time to build this trust. The first thing I do is to purchase any really great bargains that I think there is any possibility of using. It is best if you can start shopping right after Christmas as that is when the fabrics and trims that you will most want are on sale. At the same time I am shopping for bargain fabrics and trims, I am also checking to see what is around the costume shop, what other dance companies are getting rid of, and what could be borrowed. If I am doing all of the costumes throughout the year, I try to think of ways that a costume that I am doing for one production can be altered later for use in Nutcracker. If you do Swan Lake or Graduation Ball in the fall season, with a few changes you have Snow for your Nutcracker in the holiday season. We are looking at about the same number of dancers and a lot of white tutus.

Since a company will want to perform a Nutcracker each year, you are going to want to change parts of the costuming each year to keep things interesting for returning audiences. This of course means that your job is never complete, but it also means that that you can correct your mistakes of a previous year or improve on your designs after you have had time to reflect on them.

We cannot be expected to be brilliant all the time. One set of costumes which I did for a comic Nutcracker can still cause me to wake in a cold sweat. They were so terrible that I refuse to describe them. It took a sense of humor to rescue them. It was a comedy being presented by a high school drama department. Most of the students were not dancers but were able to follow choreography. The students in 'Snow' seemed less skilled in this area than most of the other students. Add to this my terrible

costumes and we had a problem. The solution came in a change in the choreography and the addition of a snow blower which removed the dancers and the costumes from the stage. The scene ended up being a favorite with the audience.

If you think of Nutcracker as a never ending project it is easier to plan for it. I usually have a master plan that the director and I have agreed upon. This way I can concentrate my efforts on a particular section each year. Be flexible; if the fabric for Chinese does not appear the year you planned to do them over and the fabric for Russian does, then replace the Russian costumes instead and hope that the other fabric is found the following year.

Nutcracker is a major ballet to costume, but it is possible to costume it on a budget and to have a set of costumes that you can be proud of.

If you have never costumed Nutcracker, I would recommend a day in the library. Read the story of the ballet. Look at as many drawings and photographs of past performances as you can find. Read the history of the ballet. There are video tapes of many different Nutcrackers; watch some of them. Buy a tape of the music and listen to it over and over. Any time I costume a dance I listen to the music as I design and construct.

When you meet with the artistic director, listen to all of his/her ideas and share all the information which you have gathered; include the bargain fabric which you have found and how you would use it. Inform him/her of any costumes that may be available from other companies. Share your ideas of the projects you would most like

to work on and which ones you feel can wait. You will have a better idea of the condition of the costumes from previous years.

If this is a first year production and time and money are both short and you have already checked what you can borrow, I would consider the following temporary fix in Act I. The easiest solution, if the director is willing, would be to do the act in present day costuming. You are then costuming from the closets of willing donors. Look at the thrift stores too. As you look for these dresses keep the style of the dresses similar and choose colors that will look like they belong together in the scene. All full skirts and all the same length would also be a good idea. Remember, Act I takes place in the winter. Remember too, that the dancers must be able to move in the dresses. Tuxedo rental shops will sometimes donate suits which are a little dated or worn in exchange for an ad in the program. If so, all of your men and boys in the first act are dressed. If you need something to pull all these costume units together you might try making the cummerbunds for the men. Match the color with that of the dress of that dancer's partner.

Another way to treat the women's dresses for the first act would be to add a matching circle skirt to a leotard. The dancers can each be in a different color but the decorative trim should be similar on each. Cummerbund fabric can be dyed at the same time as the leotards and skirts. Finish women's and girls' costumes off with something on their heads or in the hair. A garland of greenery or even a ribbon will do. Remember the ballet is a fantasy and your costumes need to reflect that even if you do decide to have the setting as modern day, Des Moines, Iowa.

If you are able to do Act One in period costumes and if you are going to do the construction, you may want to consider making all of the dresses in two separate units even if you wish for the costume to read as one unit. This will make it easier to alter in future years. When I do this type of costume I make the waist larger than it needs to be and then overlap as is needed in the back. I do not put a zipper in; I depend on the overlap. When constructing the top of the costume leave as much fabric as you can, without creating bulk, in the side seams and then let this be the last seam you sew. This will give you space to alter. Leave a deep hem, next year's dancer may be taller.

One other thing about this part of the ballet: if the dance company does not have a set of rehearsal skirts, this might be a time to discuss it with the artistic director. Rehearsal skirts can also be the undergarments for your period costume during performance. These skirts are useful to you and to the director because you can both see how the dancers will move in the costume. The dancers will also have extra time to get used to the skirt without the wear on the actual costume. They will have time to learn how the costume is going to move and how to work with it.

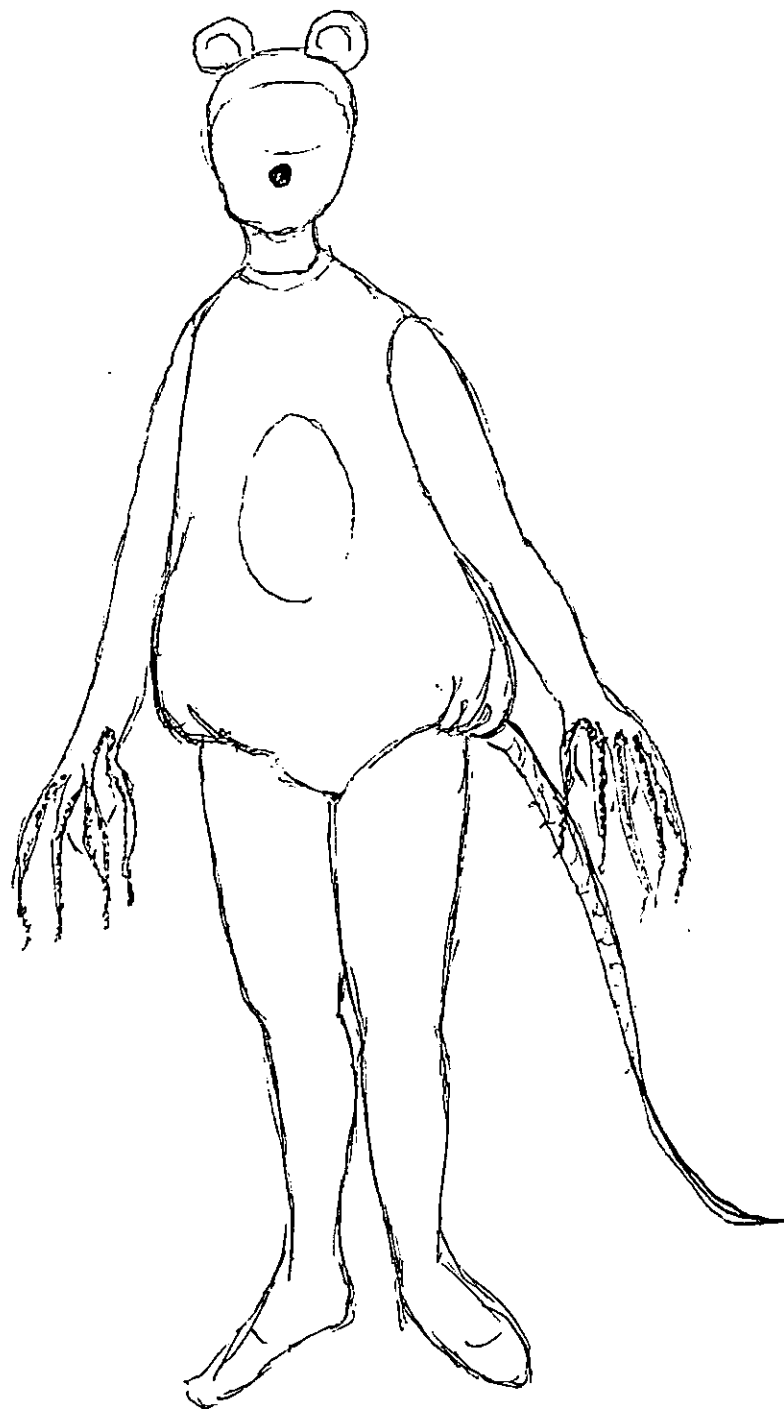
In Act I, there are two other large groups besides the group we have just discussed. They are the mice and the soldiers. The first year get both groups into well constructed unitards. Make them with quality fabric and make several extra for future years. Make the extras in larger sizes. You may not always have the same number of mice and soldiers. I happened to have found a nice gray cotton lycra at a very good price for the mice unitards. If you start with a basic unitard, you leave yourself with more possible design choices for future years. The first year I used a gray knit fabric

for a fat little body of the mouse. I made a fat leotard with sleeves and stuffed the lower part of it. I made a close fitting hood with ears out of the same fabric and attached a tail (figure F1). I did not put sleeves in the unitards, but I saved enough fabric so that I would have that option in the future. The knit part of the costume can be closed in the back at the neck with velcro and a hook and eye. The sleeves can be made very mouse like by constructing them so that they reach beyond the finger tips and then cut the ends in a jagged pattern and attach some strips of sting sequins to give a look of claws. The pear shaped, body of the mouse can be stuffed. The Rat King, being more threatening, did not have a fat little tummy. The Rat King was instead in a black unitard with long sleeves (the sleeves were done as they were for the mice). He wore a gray brocade vest. His tail was extra long and was used like a whip. His hood included a crown.

The soldiers I chose to put into long sleeved red unitards. The first year I made blue double-breasted vests to go over the unitard. Brass button and gold trim completed the vests. The first year we could not afford boots, so ballet shoes were dyed red to match the unitards. The hats were an important element of the costume, but not too hard to construct. A tube with a top on it was constructed of buckram. A circle of hat wire was sewn into the crown. This frame was covered with fake fur and a chin-strap was attached. A ring of foam rubber inside can make for a better and more comfortable fit. The next year we decorated the hats more. Another possible solution for a year or two would be to check around for some old band uniforms. Toss the pants, but use the jackets with the unitards. These will make nice soldier uniforms; just

Figure Caption

Figure F1. Mouse costume.



be sure that the dancers can move in them. Save the brass button when you discard the jackets. They are expensive and you can use them on the jackets you design later.

The next group will be angels or snow. Not all productions use the angels. The first time I costumed Angels I did not want it to look like the usual treatment. To begin with we had a lot of angels and not much money. At one time I had purchased a car load of drapery fabric for just a few dollars. The colors were pale green, pale gold and off white. It was that drapery fabric which is textured like a raw silk on one side and shiny on the other side. I pleated every piece of that fabric in the microwave. And made the costumes for the angels out of it, shiny side showing. I put a hoop in the bottom. The skirt just touched the floor. Before you microwave remember nothing metallic in the fabric and no fabric that will melt and no fabric that will shrink (unless you want it to do so). Test your fabric first. The process for permanent pleats is simple, but time consuming. If you need a lot of the fabric pleated you may want to have a group of people doing this for you. Start with damp fabric and fold it into pleats. Tie it together and twist the fabric until it is a ball. Tie it together and microwave. Check frequently. If it does not dry completely you can finish the job in the dryer. Do not untie until it is completely dry.

The angel costumes were finished with large round collars and a tinsel garland in the hair (to represent a halo). (Figure F2) These costumes cost less than any costumes that were done that year, but they were probably the most effective. They were beautiful on the stage but not so at close range. They were heavy costumes, but

Figure Caption

Figure F2. Angel costume.



the choreography called for small and slow movement. The big expense with the costumes is the time involved.

Audiences have grown to expect 'Snow' to be a very elegant and beautiful section of the ballet; therefore, you must pay close attention to it. You pretty much have to give the audience what they want, at least the first year. That first year I would make the Romantic length tutus. I would then make a white leotard with string straps and decorate the bodice of the leotard to look like the bodice of a tutu. Finish with something to match in the hair, maybe a cascade of beads and crystal. The following year you can make regular tutu bodices and the year after you can switch to the classical tutu if you wish.

In Act II, whenever possible I tried to build on a unitard. Chinese worked well for this. We made short Chinese jackets to be worn over the unitard. We used a brocade with a metallic thread running through it and dyed the unitard to match. We had three dancers, one was in deep pink, one in green and one in pale gold. I used the Folkwear pattern for the jackets. I used a Folkwear pattern for the Russian shirts which were also needed in Act II.

For the Russians we added a sash to the shirt and long pants. We could not afford boots, but we used leg warmers pulled up over the pants. I would try to get a set of boots into the costume shop as soon as the budget will allow because they do finish off a costume. Hats were made, similar to the ones for the soldiers. Check with your director on this before you make hats. Depending on the choreography, the director may not want them in hats.

‘Flowers’ is the final large group of dancers. I would suggest that you handle the same as ‘Snow’. Begin with a pale pink, string strap leotard; add a Romantic tutu of pale pink and white layers. Replace the leotard with a tutu bodice the following year. The first year I decorated the leotard with the garland of flowers which I described in Appendix C. This garland was removed and used on the bodice the following year.

Nutcracker can be fun and it is a big job. Give yourself as much time as you can and enjoy the fantasy of the whole thing.

Costuming for dancers has been a real pleasure for me. In my experience, they have been very professional and patient. Their costumes present a different set of problems than are found with other theatrical costumes and I have tried to present those in Appendix A through F. In Appendix G, I present an annotated bibliography to further aid the dance costumer.

Appendix G

Bibliography

Anderson, J. (1974). Dance. New York: Newsweek Books.

Dance gives a clear historical overview of ballet and then concentrates on modern dance. The book includes many photographs, many in color. There are costume photographs in this book which are found in few other books.

Bakst L. (1972). The decorative art of Leon Bakst. New York: Dover Publications, Inc.

The text includes a discussion of Leon Bakst and his use of color in scenic and costume design. A brief statement of plot is given for each of the ballets represented by the seventy plates. Most of the plates are in color.

Balanchine, G., & Mason, F. (1989). 101 Stories of the great ballets. New York: Anchor

The authors give a two to four page description and storyline of 101 of the more popular ballets. A very handy book for a dance costumer.

Beaumont, C. W. (1946). Ballet design: past and present. London: The Studio, Ltd.

This is a book primarily of photographs and renderings for many ballets up until the mid-forties. There are a few color

plates. The text is an historical overview of ballet.

Brody-Johansen, R. (1966). Body and clothes. London: Faber and Faber Limited.

This book takes paintings and sculpture, beginning with the Stone age and moving to the present, to illustrate clothes through the years. This book also has a very informative text. One of the best features is that each page is full of drawings to give details of how the clothing works. Some patterns are also included.

Buckle, R. (1978). Diaghilev. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

This small book is full of wonderful color, and black and white renderings done for the Ballet Russes during the time Diaghilev was artistic director. This was a time when many great artists, composers, and choreographers were brought together by Diaghilev to give new life to the ballet.

Conrad, K. K. (1979). Classical tutu construction. Abingdon, VA: Virginia Intermont College.

This is a twenty-nine-page booklet of instruction in making the shorter or classical tutu. The instructions and drawings are very clear. A list of sources for fabric and notions is included. Ms. Conrad instructs step by step making it possible for a costumer to make his/her first tutu with relative ease.

Dalva, N. V. (1988, May). Ga'ite tres Parisienne. Dance Magazine. 52-55.

This article on the costuming of a Massine ballet by Christian Lacroix includes color photographs of the completed project. The costumes, which are colorful and witty, are a departure from the traditional ballet costume.

Dood, C. (1979). Ballet. Secaucus, NJ: Chartwell Books, Inc.

Ballet is a book of 125 pages full of wonderful color photographs which show the costumes as well as the dancers very clearly. The text is limited but informative.

Dodd, C. (1980). Ballet in color. London: Cathay Books.

This book of less than one hundred pages is full of color photographs and the text of many well-known ballets.

Many of the photographs show costumes which are well known.

Dolan, J. (1986, April). Curator of the culture: The artistic convictions of costume designer Dunya Ramicova. Theatre Crafts, 20, (4) 20-24, 90-95.

The article discusses Ms. Ramicova's theories of costuming including her ideas about period costumes not being duplications of historical costumes but contemporary costumes which give a sense of the historical period. Her thoughts on the education of the theatre students are presented.

Dreher, D. (1981). From the neck up: An illustrated guide to hatmaking. Minneapolis, MN: Madhatter Press.

A book of hatmaking instruction which is easy to understand.

The work is full of drawings and photographs. One can achieve professional results with this book. One section of the book includes patterns.

Emery, J. S. (1981). Stage costume techniques. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

This book covers the responsibilities of the costumer. The workplace, fabric, measuring, pattern drafting, fitting and fabric modification are presented. An excellent list of sources is included.

Erte' (1981). Erte's fashion designs. New York: Dover Publications, Inc.

Erte's theatrical costuming carries over into his fashion design.

This book is a rich assortment of his work from Harper's Bazar.

Erte' theatrical costumes in full color. (1979). New York: Dover Publications.

Lavish theatrical costume renderings by Erte'. Many of these full color drawings are of dance costumes. The text is a short Preface. There are forty-nine renderings.

Gavenas, M. L. (1987). Flexibility and fine fabric: Jeff Goldstein's costume designs. Theatre Crafts, 21 (2), 18-21, 41-43.

The article describes the schooling, philosophy and career of a New York costume designer. The costumer does layering and dyeing to achieve the look he wants. He stresses the importance of the designer listening to the actor or dancer and keeping an

opened mind.

Fonteyn, M. (1980). Pavlova: Portrait of a dancer. New York: Viking.

This is a nice view of one of the greatest dancers by another great dancer. The black and white photographs, which are plentiful, show a number of her costumes.

Gamso, M. (1986, June/July). Conundrum: Masks and modern dance. American Craft, 40, 16-27.

The article explores the use and construction of the mask for dance. It discusses the almost magical aspects of putting on a mask and the interaction between the mask and the dancer.

Goepp, E. (1928, June). An essay toward a philosophy of costume. The Quarterly Journal of Speech, 14, 396-411.

Ms. Goepp presents a history of costume and discusses the costume as an aid to the actor in establishing a character. She talks about the flow of a dance costume.

Grigorovich, Y. & Demidov, S. (1986). The official Bolshoi Ballet book of the Nutcracker. Neptune, NJ: T.F.H. Publications Inc.

The artistic director discusses the ballet, The Nutcracker. The text includes an interesting biography of Tchaikovsky, the composer. The writer tells about his choreography and of the choreographers who preceded him. Little mention is made of the costumes but the photographs reveal considerable detail.

Gruber, A. (1994, April). The ballet royal de la nuit: A Masque at the court of Louis XIV. Apollo, 139, 34-40.

This article presents the portfolio of a ballet presented in the 1600's. It discusses the costumes and their significance in understanding the history of costumes. Five of the costume renderings are illustrated.

Hansen, R. (1980). The fairy tale book of ballet. New York: Grosset & Dunlap.

This is a presentation of three well-known ballets, Swan Lake, The Sleeping Beauty, and The Nutcracker. The storylines are given. The photographs are good costume references.

Harrison, M. K. (1988). How to dress dancers. Princeton, NJ: Princeton Book Company.

This is a simplified book for constructing some basic costume pieces. A good reference for ethnic dance costumes. Instructions for a tutu are included.

Hayes, E. R. (1993). Dance composition and production (2nd. ed.). Pennington, NJ: Princeton Book Company.

This book describes all that goes on with a ballet before it comes to the stage. Ms. Hayes discusses training, choreography, music, philosophy and costuming from the point of view of the artistic director.

Howell-Koehler, N. (1977). Soft jewelry: design, techniques & materials. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

This is a book giving instruction in soft jewelry. The designs and techniques would adapt to costume pieces because of their size, weight, softness, silence and theatrical quality.

Hunt, M. (1987, April). Designing the light fantastic. Dance Magazine. 48-52.

The article is about designer Jen-Jacob Worsaae and his work with the Boston Ballet. Mr. Worsaae explains his philosophy of dance costuming and the special problems the dancer presents. He stresses the importance of a knowledge of all the arts and a sense of proportions.

Ingham, R. & Covey, E. (1980). The costumer's handbook. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

This is a very good "how to" book for the actual construction of costumes. It is practical and includes many drawings and photographs to make the text clear. Included are sewing techniques and instructions for hats, shoes and wigs.

Ingham, R. & Covey, E. (1983). The costume designer's handbook. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

This is a true handbook for designers. It is a step by step guide approach to the whole process. It begins with designs, directors, measurements, actors and dancers and follows the process

to an opening night.

Kafka, F. A. (1959). Batik, tie dyeing, stenciling, silk screen, block printing: The hand decorating of fabric. New York: Dover Publications, Inc.

A step by step instruction in surface treatments of fabric.

The instructions are easy to understand and the processes explained use materials that are widely available and inexpensive.

McKay, G. (1994). Mask making. Edison, NJ: Chartwell Books, Inc.

The book contains easy to follow instructions and many photographs.

One can achieve professional looking masks with this book.

Migel, P. (Ed.). (1978). Pablo Picasso, design for "The Three-cornered Hat". New York: Dover Publications, Inc.

This is a group of thirty-one color renderings by Picasso for the ballet, The Three-cornered Hat. The book discusses the collaboration between Picasso and Diaghilev.

Parshall, P. (1981, January/February). The living sculpture of Carleigh Hoff. Fiberarts, 8. 28-29.

The dance costumer in this article sees her creations as sculpture. She builds on the basic unitard but her emphasis is on elaborate headpieces and masks which evolve through fittings and rehearsals.

Russell, D. A. (1973). Stage costume design: Theory, technique and style. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

This book gives a good picture of what a costumer should be and what is expected of him/her by production persons, directors, actors/dancers.

Smith, C. R. (Ed.). (1973). Theatre Crafts book of costumes. Emmaus, PA:

Theatre Crafts Books – Rodale Press, Inc.

In the over 200 page book, the editor presents 22 articles from past issues of the magazine. A wide range of topics is presented.

Sommers, M. (1989, February). Deirdre Clancy's distinctive costumes. Theatre Crafts, 23 (2). 34-39.

Deirdre Clancy is a costumer who relies on line and form for her designs. She does not hide behind glitz. She depends on her inventiveness not a big budget.

Spencer, C. (1974). The world of Serge Diaghilev. New York: Penguin Books.

This 175-page book discusses Diaghilev's era at the Ballet Russes. It presents the works of many designers and artists who worked with him when he was artistic director. The book includes the designs of Bakst, Picasso and Dali.

Tejeda, C. (1984, September/October). Leanne Mahoney: cunning for the ballet. Fiberarts, 11 (5). 64-69.

This is an interview with a costumer who prefers costuming dancers. She discusses her training and her use of stretch fabrics.

Terry, W. (1968). The ballet companion. New York: Dodd, Mead & Company.

A book written for the ballet audience which contains an historical view of the art. Terry discusses the designers as well as the dancers. The book is a good source of terms and background information.

Thomas, B. J. (1982). A practical approach to costume design and construction (Vols. 1-2). Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc.

The volumes contain many patterns and illustrations, along with many photographs. This is a very valuable set of books for the costumer.